


**Activity: Introduction to Mindfulness**

**Resilience Focus Area: Health**



**Learning Outcomes:**

- To help young people learn more about what mindfulness is and how it can help them.
- To provide young people with some practical techniques to support their wellbeing




Time	Activity	Method	Resources
5 mins	<b>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, SIGN IN &amp; CHECK IN</b>	Ask young people to complete Sign In Sheet. Once settled ask them to say their name and what they had for breakfast this morning. Introduce today’s session and expectations.  Explain how we use the Check In at the start of each session. Ask the group to say how they are feeling from 1-10 and if they want to share why.	Sign In Sheet Pen & Paper PowerPoint  Microsoft
5 mins	<b>ICEBREAKER COMPLIMENTS</b>	Ask the group when the last time was they gave / received a compliment. Ask them how this makes them feel. Ask the group to choose someone in the group and on a piece of paper to write them a compliment. Fold it up and when everyone is ready, pass it to the person to read. How does this make the group feel? Ensure everyone in the group is has a compliment. Discuss	PowerPoint Presentat PowerPoint Pen Paper
2 mins	<b>WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?</b>	Discussion with the children about what they think mindfulness is – maybe just one or two words. <i>‘Mindfulness means living fully in the present without judgement. It’s about focusing on your breathing, being aware of what’s happening in the moment, accepting what you are experiencing whether it is easy or difficult, and letting go’.</i>	PowerPoint
2 mins	<b>WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS?</b>	Ask the young people their thoughts. Explain how mindfulness can improve achievement, improve attention and focus, better emotional regulation-responding rather than reacting, greater compassion and empathy for others, reduces stress and anxiety, changes to the brain structure to break negative thinking and habits, improves behaviour, improves social skills, creates improved wellbeing, contentment and happiness.	PowerPoint


\*These sessions have been adapted from Social Sense Mindful Me resources

Time	Activity	Method	Resources
2 mins	<b>HOW DOES THE BRAIN WORK?</b>	Video/hand demonstration of the brain and where our emotions are. How mindfulness helps.	PowerPoint
5 mins	<b>BREATHING EXERCISES</b>	Ask the participants to take some deep breaths and notice where they can feel their breath. Feed back on what its like to pay attention to their breathing. Discuss how and when we do conscious, controlled breathing and the effect it has on us. Get the children to give some examples.  Can the group think of and name some benefits of breathing? Use 'science of breathing' sheet.	PowerPoint
5 mins	<b>PRACTICAL TIPS BREATHING EXERCISES</b>	Ask the group if they know of any breathing exercises? Share with the group and demonstrate these techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Square Breathing / 4-7 Breathing / Hand Breathing</li> <li>• Hourglass Breathing (<i>read aloud</i>):</li> </ul> <p><i>Sit up straight, feet on floor, hands on lap, eyes closed or focused. Be aware of what's going on in your mind and notice it. Then slowly become aware of the breath, notice how it feels in your body, rise and fall, in and out. Now re-focus on the space around you, the sounds, the smells, the people and when you're ready open your eyes.</i></p> <p>Remind the group these are easily accessible exercises which they can use anywhere, anytime to de-stress, calm and focus.</p>	PowerPoint  Breathing Handouts   Microsoft Edge PDF Document
5 mins	<b>PRACTICAL TIPS BODY SCANS</b>	Ask the group if they know of any other mindfulness exercises? Share with the group and demonstrate these techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body Scan</li> </ul> <p>Discuss how they feel about the body scan and whether they noticed anything about their bodies that they hadn't realised before. Did they notice anything new, or did anything stand out? When could they use this mindfulness technique?</p>	PowerPoint  Bod Scan Handout   Microsoft Edge PDF Document



\*These sessions have been adapted from Social Sense Mindful Me resources

Time	Activity	Method	Resources
5 mins	<b>BEING ON AUTOPILOT</b>	Ask the group what we mean when we say we're on autopilot. Give an explanation about how it is when you are 'zoned out'. Ask them to look at the questions and answer them. Discuss some of the things they do everyday without even noticing. What else do they do without thinking?	Autopilot Quiz  Microsoft Word Document
10 mins	<b>PRACTICAL TIPS MORE MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking (or indoors) Some people prefer being out in nature. And maybe don't even realise that a walk in the countryside, or at the beach, just noticing the smells, sights, sounds etc is being mindful. Paying attention to the things around you is being mindful. Take the children outside and ask them to walk around for 10mins noticing; 5 things they can see, 4 things they can hear, 3 things they can touch, 2 things they can smell and 1 thing they can taste.</li> <li>• Eating Use grape/raisin to practice mindful eating with the children to explain how they eat on autopilot, and how they can pay more attention to their food. Ask the group to pay attention and notice the colour, shape, texture, and size. Is there anything else that you notice, sense or feel? Now place the item between your fingers and feel the texture, temperature and ridges. You may notice smoothness or stickiness. Take the piece of food and bring it toward your nose and smell with your full awareness. Notice if you have any memories, sensations or reactions in your body. Place the object into your mouth without chewing or swallowing it. Just allow it to be in your mouth, roll it around to different parts of your mouth and tongue. Notice the flavour and texture. Notice the physical sensations within your body, especially your mouth and your gut. Next take just one bite and notice the flavour, notice the change of texture. Then slowly begin to chew this piece of food and notice the parts of your mouth that are involved in chewing. Notice the sound and movement of chewing, as you continue to notice the sensations and flavour. When you are ready, swallow this item and notice the path that it follows from your mouth and throat into your stomach.</li> <li>• Colouring Handout some examples of mindfulness colouring. Discuss with the group to think about why this might be a good way to practice mindfulness.</li> </ul>	PowerPoint 54321 Handout Colouring example Handout

\*These sessions have been adapted from Social Sense Mindful Me resources

Time	Activity	Method	Resources
5mins	<b>PRACTICAL TIPS</b> <b>MINDFULNESS ‘SPACE’</b>	<p><u>‘STOP, PAY ATTENTION, BE CURIOUS, ENJOY’ practice. Read aloud:</u></p> <p><i>“Sit up straight, feet flat on floor, hands on lap. Take a few conscious deep breaths. Look around the room and notice the space you are filling, be aware of your body against the chair, feet on the ground, be aware of the people around you, the light /shade in the room, the colours and textures of the walls and furniture, the temperature, the sounds, the smells. Pay attention to how your mind wanders and when you notice it, bring it back to concentrating on the exercise. Be aware of your space and be in the moment in your space.”</i></p> <p>How was that for you? What was your experience?</p> <p>Give handouts with ‘STOP, PAY ATTENTION, BE CURIOUS, ENJOY’ written on them. Ask the participants to use these words to be more mindful for the next week.</p>	PowerPoint Colour card SPACE handouts  Microsoft Edge PDF Document
5mins	<b>PRACTICAL TIPS</b> <b>BEING POSITIVE including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gratitude Journal /Praise folder</li> <li>• Positivity Jars</li> <li>• Inspirational Quotes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gratitude Journal</li> </ul> <p>Ask the group if anyone keeps a diary. Talk about how they could take just 5 minutes a day to capture all the things they are grateful for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being Kind &amp; Grateful</li> </ul> <p>It is important that we pay attention to things that are positive, and that we are grateful for. Hand out sheet ‘Being Kind and Grateful’. Ask children to fill out the first page – 3 kind things about themselves, and 3 things they are grateful for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positivity Jars</li> </ul> <p>Introduce the Positivity Jars idea. Ask the group what kinds of things they could write as notes to put in their jars. Share some examples of Music to listen to / Films to watch / Jokes to share / Inspirational &amp; Motivational quotes / Things they are good at, etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspirational / Motivational Quotes</li> </ul> <p>Show the Charlie Macksey illustrations and explain how they have helped during the Pandemic.</p>	PowerPoint Being Kind and grateful / Positivity Jars Handouts

\*These sessions have been adapted from Social Sense Mindful Me resources

5 mins	<p><b>PASSING MOMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Training Thoughts</b></li> <li>• <b>Drop of ink in water</b></li> <li>• <b>Lava Lamps / Calm Jars</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Training Thoughts</b> Talk to the group about how we apparently have around 70,000 thoughts a day! Some are just passing through, but some stick and can affect our emotions. We may even try to avoid some thoughts. But Mindfulness can help unpleasant thoughts go away, by just observing and noticing. Like dropping a pebble into a pond, our thought, if we let it, can become bigger and bigger- until we aren't then just having a thought – we are experiencing some real negative emotions!  If we can imagine our thoughts as being a train. They come fast and often, but they also pass by and are gone just as quickly...if we let them! When a train is held up, often it is because there has been a tree fall on the line, or a broken connection. When considering our thoughts, those hold ups are us clinging on to the negatives. If we let them</li> <li>• <b>Drop of ink / food colouring in water</b> Get a bowl of water and a bottle of ink or food colouring. Drop some ink into the bowl of water. Explain how initially it is strong, but after a while it mixes in with the rest of the water and is gone – you can't see it anymore. Think of a negative thing that has happened – you failed a test, or were insulted by someone – after a few hours, will that still matter, or will it be like the drop of ink – it will wash away, disappear and not matter anymore? This helps us to visualise our negative thoughts and give them some perspective in our lives.</li> <li>• <b>Lava lamps &amp; Calm Jars</b> Talk about how calm jars / lava lamps can help and why. Share the way to make your own version.</li> <li>• <b>Thought Distractions</b> Use 'thought distractions hand out' and 'distraction posters' to talk about some ideas of how we</li> </ul>	<p>Jar of water Ink / Food colouring Calm Jar / Lava lamp Handout Thought Distraction Handout</p>  <p>Microsoft Edge PDF Document</p>  <p>Microsoft Word Document</p>
--------	--	--	---

\*These sessions have been adapted from Social Sense Mindful Me resources

2 mins	<b>RECAP &amp; Q&amp;A</b>	Tell the group they are coming to the end of the training. Recap some of the things you have covered in a quick fire Q&A to the group.  Ask the group if they have any questions and answer as best you can, agreeing to go away and get	
2 mins	<b>CHECK OUT</b>	Ask the group to rate themselves between 1-10 as to how they are feeling now as they did at the start of the session.	PowerPoint
5 mins	<b>EVALUATION</b>	Ask for feedback from the group about how the session went: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What went well?</li> <li>• What they have learnt?</li> <li>• What could have been better?</li> <li>• If there are any changes to be made for future delivery?</li> </ul>	Evaluation Form Pens

\*These sessions have been adapted from Social Sense Mindful Me resources



To access more resources, information and advice visit

[www.kentresiliencehub.org.uk](http://www.kentresiliencehub.org.uk)

[www.moodspark.org.uk](http://www.moodspark.org.uk)

