



FORM TIME PRACTICES

5 to 10-minute form time practices to trigger and grow the soothing system, bringing the lessons into everyday life.

Students can refer to their lesson resources for clarity on the skills.

KINDNESS AND COMPASSION

When students use kind and compassionate tones and behaviour towards themselves and others, they grow their soothing system. This re-balances their 3 systems, giving them a reliable source of positive emotions they can depend on, especially when they are feeling anxious or stressed.

Gratitude practice

Recalling things or events that you are grateful for will trigger your soothing system and bring a better balance to your thoughts – remembering that good things happen too.

Students to write down 3 things they have been grateful for, or that went well for them, today/recently. Encourage students to try to do this every day for a week, for instance at bedtime.

Peaceful place imagery [Tutor instructions attached]

This is an exercise for calming and soothing yourself by imagining yourself in a peaceful, safe place where you feel relaxed and content.

Finding examples of compassion

Compassion is active empathy – Acknowledgement. Ask if help is needed. Act to help.

Ask students to find an example of compassion over the coming week and report back their findings the following week. This could be self-compassion* or compassionate behaviour they've noticed in others. Why did they think it was compassionate and what effect did they notice it had?

*Self-compassion/self-soothing could be: thinking mindfully/present moment awareness, cheerleading themselves, using 'Can I change it, or not?' to address a problem, self-care, journaling, living by personal values or using Dearman to ask for something that's important to them.

Positive emotional events

Acknowledging things that make you personally happy.

In pairs or small groups, students to make a note of the little things that make them feel happy.

For instance: writing with a nice pen, eating the corner chocolate Brownie, wearing new shoes or newly cleaned shoes, getting into pyjamas, using new stationery, having clean bedding, squirty cream, going to the shop after school, when your dinner arrives at a restaurant, cycling, sorting out a problem etc.

Listening to each other [see handout for students]

How well we listen has a huge impact on the quality of the relationships we enjoy. This is an exercise to practise listening to understand each other to show acceptance and care for one another.

- In pairs, person 1 spends a couple of minutes describing an event that has caused them stress
- Person 2 listens, without interrupting to talk about themselves, change the subject or to try to fix the problem
- Person 2 then reflects back the story to person 1 without judging (mindfully noticing judgements and returning to reflecting back the story), until they get it right. If they don't understand what person 1 means, ask for clarification.

This tells them that they were really being listened to and understood.

If there's time, they can swap roles and repeat the exercise.

Building connection [see handout for students]

Being with people who understand and accept you as you are is one of the best antidotes to the downs of life. Listen to another person's point of view with the aim of getting to know them and understanding them better.

In pairs, take turns asking one another questions from this list:

- given the choice of anyone in the world, who would you want as a dinner guest and why?
- would you like to be famous and in what way?
- what would be a perfect day for you?
- if you could wake up tomorrow having gained one quality or ability, what would it be and why?
- what would you do with a million pounds?
- what would your dream life be like?

Whilst listening, be patient and don't interrupt; be tolerant and respectful of the other person's values and views – no verbal attacks or harsh judging or moralising. Notice differences without judging. Adopt an easy manner – smile, use a little humour and be light-hearted.

Memes

Students to find/bring in a meme they find helpful. Explain why they like it and which skill they think it could relate to. [Can memes be shared in a form folder that everyone can see?]

MINDFULNESS

Here are a few tasks to practise thinking mindfully, noticing distracting thoughts and feelings etc, naming them if they can, then gently returning their awareness to the task.

Body scan/check in

Experiencing our bodies, rather than getting caught up in judgemental thinking about them being too this or too that, can help change our view of ourselves in a very positive way. This is an exercise to tune in to your body – what it's doing, its sensations, how it feels – without judging it.

Paste this link into the web browser and scroll down to the 3-minute body scan meditation:

<https://www.headspace.com/meditation/body-scan>

Five things

Students to *mindfully* notice 5 things they can see, 5 things they can hear, 5 things they can feel.

Headspace meditations

Here are a couple of short Headspace meditations to use:

1-minute: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEqZthCaMpo>

5-minute: <https://www.headspace.com/meditation/5-minute-meditation>

For more meditations, Headspace offer free subscriptions to schools. If you haven't already signed up, click on this link and select school location for the UK: <https://www.headspace.com/educators>

Forward links to students if possible.

CHEERLEADING

Challenges to thoughts

Students to think of a problem they are struggling with and notice/reflect on the way they speak to themselves about it. Then write down some cheerleading challenges to these thoughts that they could use when they come up.

CAN I CHANGE IT, OR NOT?

Acknowledging all the issues we're juggling helps us to remember to cut ourselves some slack and have more compassion for ourselves when facing these challenges.

Use Can I change it, or not? to see what problems we can change and what we can let go of.

Courage over comfort [see handout for students]

This is an activity to encourage students to practice getting out of their comfort zone.

Mindmap a problem you can change [see handout for students]

Students can use this mindmap sheet to look at a problem, to help them begin to untangle what's important to them with what's hindering them, and make a plan.

Continue creating your own Guide

Carry on with designing their own Guide (the final activity of the Can I change it, or not? lesson): picking out areas of advice from the Guide that they might find helpful and would like to try.

PERSONAL VALUES

Listening to and acting on your own needs shows compassion for yourself and this grows the soothing system pathways in the brain.

Reflect a personal value in your life this week

Referring to their Values Compass, students to decide which value they are going to try to reflect in their lives this week, setting a goal so it's reflected more as they want it to be.

Or write down two value-based goals they have accomplished recently.

DEARMAN

Using DEARMAN as a guide, note down a script for asking for something you want, or saying no, or to address an issue that's become a problem between you and someone else.

Successful boundary setting is down to whether you choose to uphold your boundary or not, not down to whether someone obeys your request.

- Do you say no to the request?
- Do you ask them to leave?
- Do you choose to leave the room?