

Learning Activity 1

Review a Mindful Minute and Better Breathing

Introduce Mindful Senses

Time (minutes)
10

Organization
Students seated in the instructional area.

Activity Progression:

Review equity, diversity and inclusion. Have students practice Better Breathing and a Mindful Minute for 60 seconds.

Example script:

“Last lesson we talked about diversity. What does diversity mean? [Take answers from students.] Diversity is a range of differences that make us unique (e.g., race, religion, language, gender, age, physical ability, mental ability, nationality, sexual orientation, socio-economic status). Even though we may be diverse we also have similarities. It’s important to respect people’s differences and accept them for who they are. It’s also equally important to accept our own differences. Sometimes it can be challenging when we feel different or if we feel like we don’t fit in, so it’s good to practice accepting our own differences so we can continue to empower ourselves by becoming more confident. More confidence helps us make better health-related decisions.

[Guide a brief discussion around inclusion. Present a task that isn’t realistic for any of the students to be successful at. Then ask the students to figure out how to make the task easier, but still challenging for everyone in their group.

For example, the teacher can start with two ropes parallel to each other 8 feet apart. When asking the students to jump from one rope to the other, none will be successful. But when one rope is moved to be on an incline, or a higher surface, it allows all students to be successful. The focus is to make sure all activities offer the incline and not the parallel representing inclusiveness.]

Now, let’s practice Better Breathing. Remember when we do our Better Breathing, we are going to take a deep breath in so that it fills our lungs up so much our stomach pokes out almost like you are filling up a balloon with air. Then we will breathe out SLOWLY and QUIETLY. Ready? Let’s breathe in nice and deep [Count to 4 as students breathe in] and now let’s breathe out SLOWLY and QUIETLY [count to 4 as students breathe out]. Good I can tell we are getting better at Better Breathing! Now let’s close our eyes and start our Mindful Minute- remember we are focusing on our breathing. [Time 60 seconds and allow students to perform a Mindful Minute] Nice job! I

feel relaxed and ready to participate in today’s lesson. Can someone tell me when a good time is to use Better Breathing or a Mindful Minute?”
“Excellent! Yes, we can use a Mindful Minute or Better Breathing when we are feeling upset and need to calm down, when we are scared, or just need to relax. We are going to practice two more techniques you can add to your ‘toolbox’ to use if you find yourself out of sorts.”

Explain to students they will learn a technique called Mindful Senses.

Example Script:

“The next tool you can use to help calm your mind is called Mindful Senses. This tool uses your five senses to help you focus on your environment instead of the thoughts that might be racing in your mind. Remember, part of being mindful is paying attention to your environment as well.”

Guide students through the Mindful Senses exercise. Allow students to find their own space in the instructional area where they feel comfortable. Give students the following prompts:

- o Notice five things you can see. Look around you and become aware of your environment. Try to pick out something that you don’t usually notice.
- o Notice four things you can feel. Bring attention to the things that you’re currently feeling – maybe how your clothes feel or if your hands are touching the ground.
- o Notice three things you can hear. Listen for sounds you don’t normally notice. It could be the soft buzz of the lights or maybe something outside.
- o Notice two things you can smell. Bring attention to scents that you usually filter out, either pleasant or unpleasant. Maybe you smell the laundry detergent on your clothes.
- o Finally, notice one thing you can taste. What is the current taste in your mouth?

Example Script:

“So now you have three tools in your toolbox for calming your mind. Before I teach you the last tool, we are going to do an activity to see how many calm words you know. This activity will also give you an idea of how our minds can be when we don’t feel calm.”

Cues:

- Mindfulness (or Self-Awareness) is paying full attention to our
 - thoughts
 - emotions
 - body
 - environment
- Focusing on the present
 - the past already happened
 - the future isn’t here yet
- Equity is the quality of being fair and impartial.
- Diversity is a range of differences that make us unique (e.g., race, religion, language, gender, age, physical ability, mental ability, nationality, sexual orientation, socio-economic status).
- Inclusion is being included within a group.
- Mindful Minute
 - Closing your eyes
 - Focus on breathing
 - Noticing what is around you
 - Takes practice – it’s okay for the mind to wander; bring your mind back to your breathing
- Better Breathing
 - Take a deep breath in so deep your belly pokes out
 - Breathe in on a count of 4 slowly and deeply
 - Breathe out to a count of 4 slowly and quietly
- Mindful Senses
 - 5 things you can see
 - 4 things you can feel
 - 3 things you can hear
 - 2 things you can smell
 - 1 thing you can taste

Modifications/Differentiation:

- Allow students the option to sit or lay quietly, walk around the room quietly or use a fidget quietly.
- Smell the Flower and Blow Out the Candle is another method to teach deep breathing
- Have students imagine there is a balloon in their belly

Checks for Understanding:

- How does Mindful Senses work to help calm someone’s mind?