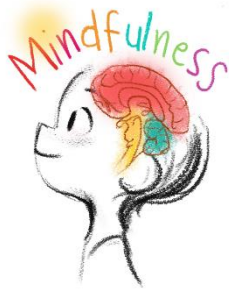


Mindfulness Helps Us to Take Notice



Mindfulness helps us to **TAKE NOTICE** - being in the moment - noticing everything around you. 'Being in the moment' starts with **BREATHING**.

This does not have to take up lots of teaching time – research supports that just 60 seconds a day can have significant positive impact.

- ✚ A few slow breaths can make us all **feel calmer**
- ✚ Theory – controlled breathing sends a signal to the brain that **ALL IS WELL**
- ✚ It begins to **calm the nervous system** and **slow the body's stress response**
- ✚ Research shows 60 seconds of **consistent** mindfulness practice students are **calmer, pay more attention** & lessons go more smoothly.



Make it FUN! - choose one exercise appropriate for your age group. Complete each of these about 6-7 times until 60 seconds is up- use a timer

Bear breath – Bears sleep in caves and breathe slowly and deeply, 'let's do bear breaths together take a slow breath in..... and a slow breath out. Imagine you are that bear in the cave and let's breathe together (ideally breathe in for 4 and out for 5 as a minimum)



Hot Chocolate – 'imagine you have a cup of really hot chocolate in your hands – smell the lovely flavour and feel the warmth on your hands, now slowly blow your hot chocolate and let's breathe together' (ideally breathe in for 4 and out for 5 as a minimum)

Beautiful Flower ' imagine you have a really unusual flower in your hand, smell it and breathe in the beautiful scent and then slowly blow onto the petals and watch them float away down to the floor – now let's breathe together (ideally breathe in for 4 and out for 5)



You can fit this into the schedule of the school day to suit you and your class. **There is no need to do more than this**, the key is to do it daily and consistently in order to support the children to develop the habit of being mindful.

Incorporating KINDNESS and compassion into mindfulness (once established in a school routine)

Do the breathing exercises as above and once calm, say to the children:
'now breathe in and as you breathe in, picture someone you love and think of something **KIND** you could say to that person – say it quietly in your mind'
'now think of a different person, someone who may be struggling or having a hard time or who doesn't feel well and think of something **KIND** you could say to that person, say it quietly in your mind' continue to breathe in and breathe out being aware of your breathing.



Be grateful – you can continue with the exercises and as you become more experienced, you can think of all the things you are grateful for when you breathe in and out. It takes JUST 1 MINUTE a day – but over time it begins to **build the children’s ability and brain capacity for practising compassion and kindness**. This in turn will have a long-lasting impact on them and will help them to make positive changes which will improve their mental health and wellbeing in their future



For children who find emotional regulation difficult and regularly need support this is even more important.

In these circumstances, these adults could teach this child simple mindfulness practises TAILORED to their age. Over time and with consistent practise, they learn to **calm themselves** and they become **'self-aware'** so that they recognise when they are becoming dysregulated and can stop it in its tracks through mindfulness techniques.

Give it a try! When used as part of the 5 ways to wellbeing and done consistently, this SIMPLE yet powerful tool can literally change a child's life.

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