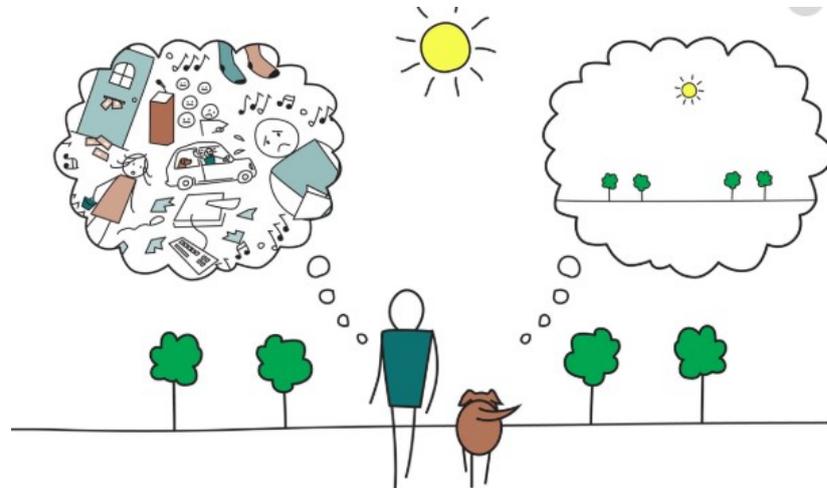
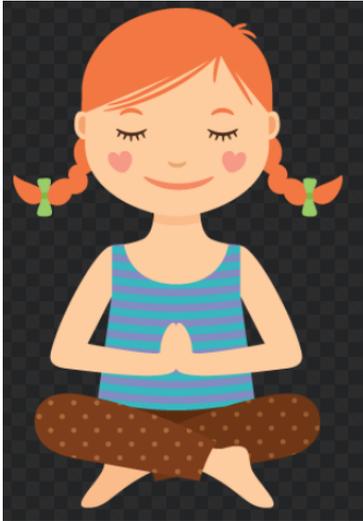


# MINDFULNESS



Mind Full, or Mindful?

Top tips for being mindful: The activity needs **your full focus**, you need to “pay attention, on purpose, to the present moment” Grossman 2016.

Why practice mindfulness? It can reduce stress and anxiety, increase concentration and help you to recognise emotions that you might be feeling.

## Mindfulness Challenge:

Try to complete **at least one exercise each day**. Remember to try to focus on the task and clear your mind of all other thoughts. Don't worry if your mind wanders off, just bring it back to the task. Notice how you feel **before** and how you feel **afterwards**.

- 1) Squeeze a muscle group as hard as you can for 5 seconds, then release, noticing how your body feels after relaxing each set of muscles.
- 2) Belly breathing—put one hand on your stomach and the other on your chest. Pretend you have a balloon in your belly. Slowly inflate it, and then deflate it. Do this for 3 minutes.
- 3) Eat a meal mindfully, paying attention to tastes, textures, colours, smells, how it looks, without doing anything else (that includes talking)!
- 4) Listen to music—focus on the whole song, or pick out an instrument or a voice.
- 5) Colour a picture, focussing on the colours and designs and clear your mind.

# TENSE AND RELEASE

## MUSCLE RELAXATION

1. Starting at the feet, gently squeeze the muscles in the feet by tightening them, then slowly releasing.
2. Next, squeeze the large muscles in the calves for 5 seconds, then gently release. Working your way up the body, squeeze the thigh muscles for 5 seconds then gently release.
3. Continue moving up the body for more relaxation.



Big Life Journal - [biglifejournal.com](http://biglifejournal.com)

# Heartbeat Exercise



Ask your child to stand up and either jump up and down or do jumping jacks for one minute.

At the end of that minute, have them place their hand on their heart and pay attention to how their heartbeat and their breathing feels.



<p>Mindfulness Activity Card</p> <p>Place your hand on your belly. Take 10 deep breaths and notice your hand moving up and down as you breathe.</p>	<p>Mindfulness Activity Card</p> <p>Sit very still and notice one thing that you can see, hear, feel, taste and smell.</p>
<p>Mindfulness Activity Card</p> <p>Close your eyes and spend one minute thinking about the happiest day of your life. Try to remember as much about that day as you can.</p>	<p>Mindfulness Activity Card</p> <p>Close your eyes and think about how you are feeling. Happy? Sad? Mad? Scared? Excited? Something else? Think about how you know you are feeling this way.</p>
<p>Mindfulness Activity Card</p> <p>Close your eyes and sit quietly. Notice the way that your clothes feel on your body. Notice your shirt, pants and shoes. Do you notice anything you didn't notice before?</p>	<p>Mindfulness Activity Card</p> <p>Sit quietly and place a small object in your hand. A pencil, eraser, or something else. Notice how heavy the object is. Think about what it feels like in your hand. Notice one new thing about this object.</p>

Mindfulness 5-4-3-2-1

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

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According to Jon Kabat-Zinn, mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in a present moment and non-judgmentally.

Mindfulness also involves acceptance. This means paying attention to thoughts and feelings without judging or reacting to them.

When you're mindful, there is no "right" or "wrong" way to think or feel in a particular moment.



[www.gozen.com](http://www.gozen.com)

Keeping thoughts and feelings hidden inside can make your thoughts become jumbled. Writing them down or talking about them can make you feel both happier and healthier. It just takes practice! Can you set some time aside each day to talk about how you are feeling? You could use these pictures?...Do you feel any of these things right now?



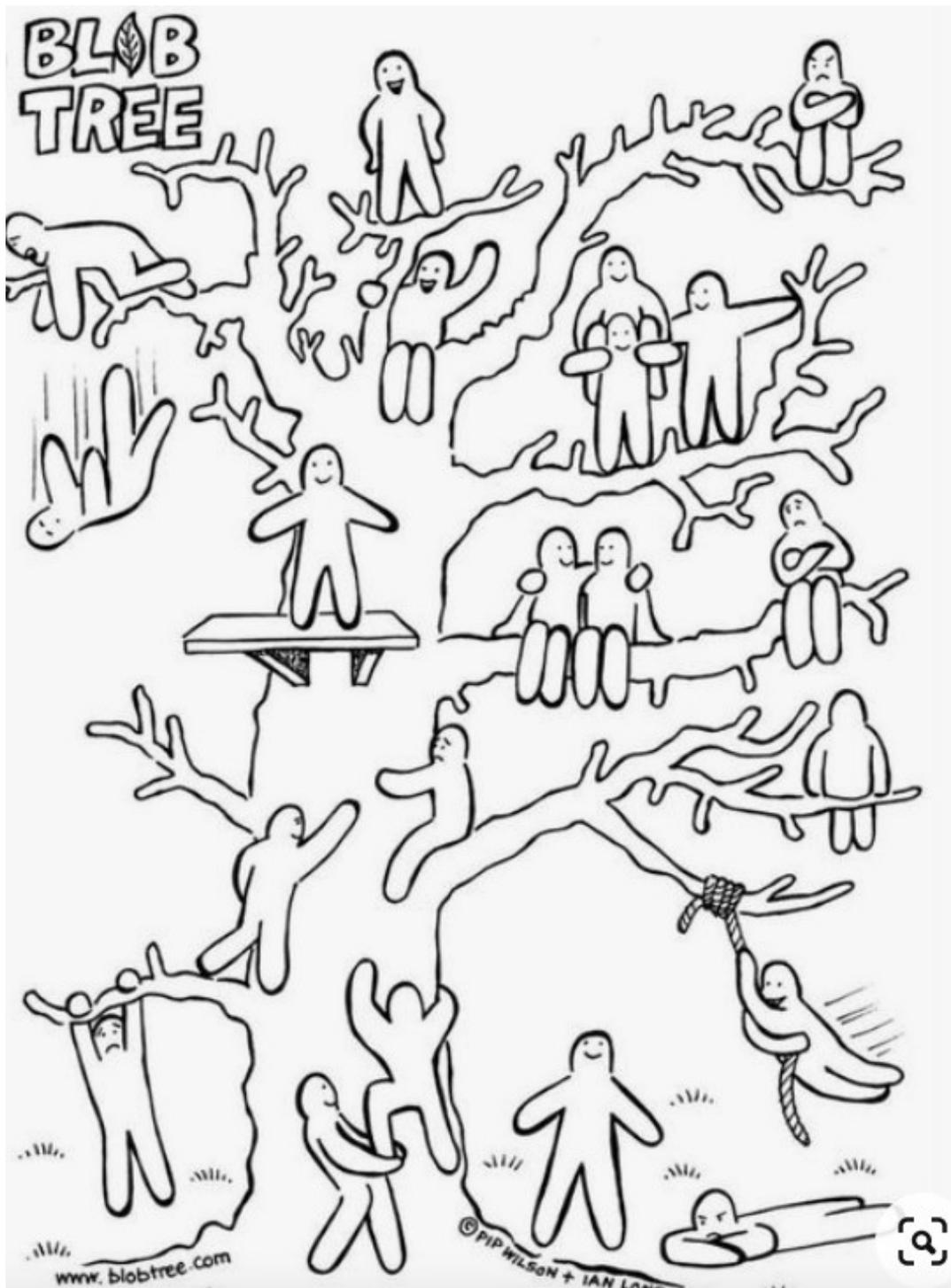
Talking about how we feel might take practice. Negative feelings get smaller when you talk about them with somebody that you trust. The opposite is true for happy feelings...if you share them, they get **BIGGER** .....so it's important to share happy feelings as well!

Why not try writing down 3 feelings (positive or negative) that you have had, each day? Also think about what has caused them. Take some time to talk about how you are feeling with someone that you trust. You could start your sentence with:

Today I felt ..... because .....

Talking about our feelings or writing them down is a way of keeping ourselves healthy, like getting enough exercise, cleaning our teeth or eating plenty of fruit and vegetables!

There are lots of ways to use the Blob Tree. It can be a really helpful way of thinking about how you are feeling. Whereabouts in the tree are you right now? What is that blob doing / how is it feeling? Are you happy where you are or do you want to be somewhere else in the tree? If you want to be somewhere else, what can you do to help yourself to get there? It might be as simple, as face timing a friend, tidying your bedroom, being kind to yourself or doing a good deed for somebody else.

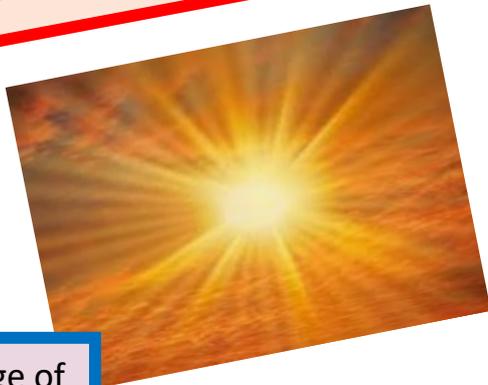


## Collage of things that make me happy

First, close your eyes and take some time to remember the things that have brought a smile to your face and filled you with energy and excitement recently.

**Remember to look for both the big and the small things:**

- ◆ Things that do not cost anything; colours, smells, weather, sounds, words
- ◆ Things you do; games, activities, hobbies, special moments
- ◆ People; friends, family, inspiring people.
- ◆ Pets and animals.



Create a collage of all the things that make you happy in your life—draw pictures, use photos, cut out pictures from magazines...it's up to you!

The collage can be work in progress—you can always add to it. Remember that it's there to look at, if you need cheering up.





# A Handful of Strengths

First, think about what makes you unique. What are your strengths? What sets you apart from other people? Don't forget that helping others, smiling, being kind are just as important as being good at football, for example.

If this is tricky, think about:

Something that your friends have said about you,

I'm proud of.....

My family was happy when I .....

I'm good at .....

Draw around your hand and write one strength onto each finger.

Each day, practice using each strength in the activities and things that you do. When you do this, reward yourself in some little way!



- I am a good friend.
- I am resilient.
- I like to help others.

The following resources have been recommended by Dr Holmes, Principal Educational Psychologist, to help with discussing current events and the ongoing impact that they have on us all.

1) Newsround offers an explanation for children with a useful video answering lots of questions about the virus. It is really good for reassuring children.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51861089>

2) Young Minds offers helpful information to parents about talking to children and young people about Coronavirus:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/talking-to-your-child-about-coronavirus/>

3) Young Minds have a useful blog for young people to access themselves:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>

4) To explain the virus to younger children, there's also an excellent story-based resource from ELSA Support:

<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/coronavirus-story-for-children/>

5) From the BPS:

<https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Policy/Policy%20-%20Files/Talking%20to%20children%20about%20Coronavirus.pdf>