

A simple stilling/body awareness exercise for younger child

So today we're going on an adventure into our own thoughts and feelings. Let's have time to relax and let our minds and bodies be quiet just for a little while...

Sit on the carpet, cross-legged, back straight, yet relaxed. Fold your hands one on top of the other gently and let them rest in your lap. Close your eyes when you're ready. Maybe begin by taking a few deep breaths. As you breathe in, imagine breathing in happiness and calm feelings and as you breathe out, imagine letting go of any busy thoughts.

Breathe easily, in and out, in and out. Start to notice how you're feeling. Quietly notice whether you're feeling happy or sad, angry or peaceful, notice if your mind is lively or quiet. Just take a few moments to listen to how you feel.

Now listen to your body. Does your body feel full of energy, or a bit sleepy? Notice how your body feels, perhaps some bits are tired and other bits are full of beans. So now notice your feet. See if you notice any feelings in your feet. See if you can relax them so they're resting gently on the floor. Thank them for all the work they do, running around for you every day!

Now moving up each of your legs, letting your legs relax and asking the carpet below you to support the weight of your body as you sit quietly and have a moment's relaxation.....

So now notice the main part of your body. Let your tummy relax, and your shoulders, and all the way down your arms and into your hands. Make sure you've folded your hands in your lap gently so they can relax and thank them for all the things they do for you everyday.

And let your head be relaxed on your shoulders. Hold your head straight, not pointing either up nor down, but just gently held on your shoulders. Gently balanced on your shoulders.

So begin to notice your breath. When you're ready, start to focus on your breath, in and out, in and out, in and out. Notice the natural rhythm of your breath, a bit like gently waves breaking on the sea shore. Keep focusing on the gentle rising and falling of your breath, in and out of your body. Follow the flow of your breath.....

And if your mind wanders off a bit, just come back to noticing your breath. Notice how it feels. Notice where your breath first enters your body - perhaps your nose, perhaps your mouth. Notice your clothes gently moving against your skin as your breath moves gently through your body.....

Now, while continuing to breathe, take some time to think about someone that you love and the things you enjoy doing together. Perhaps send that person love as you bring them to mind.....

And when you're ready, let go of noticing your breath and come back to the feeling of sitting in the classroom, with your classmates all around you. Think about what you can do after this quiet time to help someone. Maybe spend some moments again thinking about how much you care for your families and friends.....

When you're ready, take a final deep breath in, slowly let it out, and open your eyes when you're ready.

(Maybe after a few moments, ask the children how they found the exercise, how it felt etc).

