

"Hope is a waking dream."
~Aristotle



Topic: **Self-Regulation.**

Lesson Objective

Students will learn multiple self-regulating techniques including meditation, visualization, practicing gratitude, journaling positive thoughts and using creativity to keep a hopeful state of mind.

Teacher Notes

As we go through this lesson, we will practice many of the tools we can use for hope. You may need to select which activities you practice and which you skip if you have time constraints. We would highly encourage you to teach each of the tips to your students.

Materials needed

Student's Hope Sunflower

Lesson Four Quiz: Creating a Hopeful Mindset

Step by Step teaching guide

Pre questions

- 1) Can someone explain what the downstairs brain controls and what happens when it knocks on the upstairs brain's door?

Lesson Steps

- 1) In the last lesson, we learned that we need to stay in the upstairs brain and that we need to nourish our brains in order to have hope. In this lesson, we will learn tools try to keep ourselves in the hopeful upstairs brain.
- 2) The first activities are ones we can do almost anywhere and anytime. Incorporating them into our daily lives will make us more balanced and hopeful. Some of these tools you can use in the moment when your downstairs brain is knocking or has already taken over. Some tools you can use daily to stay hopeful overtime.
- 3) **Deep Breathing Exercise** Review from Lesson 3.

4) **Meditation.** You can meditate in many ways. Meditation has been found to improve memory, increase creativity, reduce anxiety, help us relax, get better sleep, and is good for our emotional well-being.ⁱ There are many great apps for meditation, and sources on the website. We are sharing the basic practice, yet if you search online, you will find many options. Feel free to explore and get more advanced. **Teacher Prompt:** Have students get as comfortable as possible. It is okay if students remain in their seats/desks for this activity. The classroom needs to be as quiet as possible. Have students close their eyes, keep their bodies still, and focus only on breathing. As you breathe in and out, through your nose when possible; focus only on how the breath coming and going feels on your skin. Anytime your mind wanders, focus back on the breath and the sensation right below your nose. Practice this meditation for five minutes. If it is helpful when they are beginning, students may count to five in their head as they inhale and count to five again as they exhale. The goal is to quiet their mind/thoughts, be still, and focus only on each breath.

5) **Visualization.** Close your eyes and focus on an image that makes you feel good. Think about this image for 30 seconds (or for a few minutes, as long as possible), and notice the sensations you feel in your body. Breathe deeply and continue appreciating and experiencing how this image makes you feel. Then take that new outlook into your day.

6) **Practicing Gratitude.** Another technique you may use to calm down if you're feeling stressed, angry, scared, or frustrated over days, weeks, or months; is to show **gratitude**. If you pay attention to three things a day toward which you are grateful, you are focusing on what is good in your life. This gratitude helps you stay hopeful even if there are events out of your control that challenge your hope.

- What are some things you are grateful for?

7) **Journaling.** There are many forms of journaling, but a very simple one is simply writing down positive things that happened throughout your day. No matter how big or small, find something that makes you smile. If you can't think of anything, try to remember the last time you felt joy and write about it.

8) **Creative Activity.** Finally, you can relax your emotions and prepare your brain for hope by doing **activities that are creative**. Playing, using your imagination to make up skits or stories, coloring, drawing, or designing other art projects (or any other activity where you use your creativity), can help you release tension, anger, stress, and frustration in order to prepare your mind for hope.

Story

How Joseph Calms Down

Joseph often got very frustrated with his little brother Tomas. Tomas always wanted to do the exact same things that Joseph was doing. When Joseph got home from school, Tomas would follow him all around the house. He would sit right next to him when he watched TV, lie next to him when Joseph read his homework assignments, and even walked behind Joseph all the way to the mailbox when Joseph retrieved the mail; one of his daily chores.

Often times after school, Joseph’s mother would ask Joseph to do something for her, like take out the trash. Joseph was always so frustrated about Tomas following him everywhere that he frequently did not hear his mother or remember what she asked him to do. This often got Joseph in trouble.

Joseph learned the hope tools about how to create a hopeful mind, and liked the idea of taking deep breaths and being grateful for three things a day. Joseph started to use these tools in order to relax his mind and body when Tomas irritated him.

First, Joseph would take a few deep breaths every day before walking inside his house after getting off of the school bus. This really helped him settle down before seeing his younger brother.

Joseph also started to practice gratitude. In the morning, during lunch, and at dinner, Joseph would stop and write down one thing he was grateful for in the back of a notebook he used for school. Joseph tried to focus on reasons he was grateful for Tomas at least once a day.

Joseph found that after using these tools, he did a better job at hearing and remembering what his mother asked him to do. Joseph was nicer to Tomas too, which also kept him out of trouble.

By using the hope tools for calming your mind, you can work to reduce the frustration you have the same way that Joseph does.

Post questions

- 1) Are any of these tools for creating a hopeful mind tools you already use?
- 2) Do you think one or a few of these tools can help you?
- 3) How can you use these hope tools every day?

Activity

On your Hope Sunflower, write a reminder to yourself about when you want to use one of these hope tools and which tool you want to use.

Teacher Prompt: Please pass out a Journal Question sheet to each student. Students should hold on to these sheets to reference for lessons 4-6. You may also write the journal questions in front of the class. Students may use a spiral notebook or other sheet of paper to write down their responses.

Use Journal Questions sheet to write about three things you are grateful for and three positive events that have happened in your day.

Administer Lesson Four Quiz: Creating a Hopeful Mindset

1. Which tool is not used for creating a hopeful mind?
 - a) Meditation

- b) Deep Breathing
- c) Visualization
- d) Practicing Gratitude
- e) Ignoring Bad Feelings

2. Do you think one or a few of these tools can help you?

- a) Yes
- b) No

3. Self-Regulating Exercises should be practiced:

- a) Once a month.
- b) Every day.
- c) Only when needed.
- d) Twice a week.

4. What hope tools did Joseph practice to create a hopeful mind?

- a) Meditation and Visualization
- b) Deep Breathing and Practicing Gratitude
- c) Journaling and Doing Something Creative

d) Practicing Gratitude and Meditation

Additional Teaching Tools for Lesson 4

*The following list of stories and activities are recommended to enhance student learning, experience, and to encourage and promote further discussions related to each lesson's content. Please choose what fits best for you, your students, and classroom environment. You may locate the resources listed below from the provided book *Chicken Soup for the Soul in the Classroom*.

Stories

p. 99 *Did the Earth Move for You?*

p. 111 *The Power of Attitude*

Activities

p. 15-17 Creative Activities

p. 41 Things I'm Thankful For

p. 185-186 Here I Am

p. 315-316 Mirror Exercise

Journal Questions

Students may use a spiral notebook to write down their journal responses to the following questions.

Lesson Four: How to Create a Hopeful Mind

What are three things you are grateful for?

What are three positive things that have happened in your day?

Lesson Five: Hopeful Purpose

Different paths I could take in my life based on what I love to do are:

What it might be like to live out my passions:

The way I might feel pursuing my purpose and passion is:

Where I might live if I pursue my purpose and passion is:

I would be surrounded by:

Hope Sunflower

