

Pictou County Forest School - Grade 9 Pre-Visit Lesson Plans

Healthy Living

Activity: Be Your Own Charging Station

Overall Curriculum Outcome:

- Demonstrate positive self-identity that effectively enables them to manage their health, their relationships, and interactions with the world.

Specific Curriculum Outcomes:

- analyze their health needs in times of change and apply strategies that enhance their capacity to manage change in their lives
- assess level of physical activity to determine whether they are active enough to achieve health benefits and identify time in the day to increase physical activity in 5- to 10-minute periods
- create a plan that enhances their healthy eating practices, and reflect on supportive environments and challenges to achieve these healthy eating practices

Materials:

- T-chart checklist

Context:

High school can be a very over-stimulating, noisy, stressful place to spend an entire day. With commitments to classes, friends, relationships and social media, the idea of self-care or mindfulness is usually neglected. Over time this has a deleterious effect on the minds and souls of our developing students. If students are going to claw back some time for themselves throughout the day to recharge and recentre their emotions and wellness, they need to fill their toolbox with some quick and effective ways to calm their nervous systems.

Below are some ways that students can quickly and effectively disconnect from the frenzy of the day and quickly recharge their batteries. Students are challenged to use one of these between each class. These can be done at lockers or even while on the move between classes.

Box breathing: Mindful breathwork is one of the most powerful and fast-acting ways of calming the nerves and refocusing the mind. (image attached below)

- Perform each of the following for 4 seconds - Inhale; hold; exhale; hold.

Positive affirmations: Have three or four powerful, positive and affirming quotes or thoughts taped up in your locker or saved to your photos. Read these often. Use them as lighthouses throughout your day to keep what's important at the forefront of your mind.

Body movement: Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR). PMR is an exercise that reduces stress and anxiety in your body by having you slowly tense and then relax each muscle. The theory behind this exercise is that you cannot have the feeling of relaxation and warm well-being in your body and at the same time experience anxiety symptoms. With practice, you will become more aware of when you are experiencing tension and you will have the skills to help you relax.

<https://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/counseling/anxietytoolbox/pmr.html#:~:text=PMR%20is%20an%20exercise%20that,same%20time%20experience%20anxiety%20symptoms.>

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Music: What calming or inspiring music is coursing

Images: Powerful, funny, cute, calming images of animals, nature, friends and family are proven to be good for your well being and are a great way to snap you out of a funk and reframe your mind in a more positive state.

Touch: Hugging and other forms of nonsexual touching cause your brain to release oxytocin, known as the “bonding hormone.” This stimulates the release of other feel-good hormones, such as dopamine and serotonin, while reducing stress hormones, such as cortisol and norepinephrine.

<https://www.dignityhealth.org/articles/facts-about-touch-how-human-contact-affects-your-health-and-relationships>

Power of positivity: The “Think-Feel-Do” Cycle. (image attached below)

Educators can check in with students periodically to see how students are faring. What strategies are working? Which ones are easiest to perform on the go?

THINK-FEEL-DO Cycle

CIRCUMSTANCE:

The neutral facts, separate from any thoughts or opinions.

THINK

The sentences that run through your mind, helping you assign meaning to our circumstances.

FEEL

The vibrations and emotions that run through your body as a result of your thinking.

DO

The actions and behavior inspired by your emotions and feelings.

RESULT

The outcome of the actions that you do or don't take.

Whatever the **CIRCUMSTANCE**, the way you **THINK** determines how you **FEEL** which impacts what you **DO** to create your life **RESULT**.

BOX BREATHING

