



Under Pressure

Aim:

To understand some possible effects of stress and identify some coping strategies.

Preparation and materials:

Create a free account at mindsight.com to access a guided meditation e.g.

<https://my.headspace.com/kids/6>

3 large cardboard boxes. Each box should be labelled with a worry that children might experience e.g. SATs, changing schools, falling out with their best friend, family arguments.

Mini obstacle course set up at the front.

Assembly

Entry music: Under Pressure, David Bowie and Queen

1. Show children the obstacle course. It looks easy, doesn't it? Ask a volunteer to come and complete it. Explain that, when life is going well, it often feels like we can take obstacles in our stride and they might not affect us too much. We can bounce back from them easily. We are resilient.
2. Now pick up one of the boxes, ensure that children can see the worry labelled on it. What effect will carrying this box have on completing the obstacle course? Why? You might want to get another volunteer to demonstrate. What about carrying two boxes at the same time? What about three boxes?
3. What do you think this illustration shows? When life is going well, we can handle obstacles and challenges more easily. Stress and obstacles are a normal part of life that normally pass quite quickly. However, when we are carrying worries around, it makes us less able to handle further challenges. Our worries can feel overwhelming and we are no longer able to navigate life well.
4. What can we do when we feel stressed or worried to help us put down our boxes? Take suggestions from the children or suggest others which could include: talking to a friend or adult, exercise, getting a good night's sleep. As children suggest strategies, put down each of the boxes you have been carrying. What virtues might we need to show to start to deal with our worries?

The Character Curriculum

Flourishing for Life



Reflection:

Mindfulness is a way of focusing on your breath and the current moment that you are in, in order to help you feel calm and more able to cope with whatever might happen during the day. Use a guided meditation e.g. Mindspace to help children practice mindfulness.

Challenge:

Practice at least 1 minute of mindfulness every day this week. Notice how you feel before and after the practice.