

Mindfulness Week 6

By mindfully observing their senses, students will become adept at sharpening their attention and using sensory experiences to enhance memory, problem solving, relationships, creativity, and physical performance.

Mindful Smelling

This week your child will practice focusing their attention through their sense of smell and describe observations. They will also identify thoughts and feelings triggered by various scents.

Scents can be a very powerful memory cue. We encourage you to discuss with your child how scents can change your mood. Which scents would make you feel relaxed? If we could find a scent that was relaxing, how could that help us remember information we need to know in class?

What is Mindful Smelling?

Just by catching a whiff of a familiar scent, our brain can call to mind the people, places, or things we associate with it. Mindful smelling – using our sense of smell to be more aware of our environment – can help us to keenly observe our world and sharpen our memory. Practicing focused awareness, with a new sense, smell continues to broaden students' ability to observe and enjoy their experiences.

Linking to Brain Research – (The MindUp Curriculum)

Our brains have more than four dozen types of neurotransmitters, chemicals that allow signals to pass between neurons. One of these neurotransmitters, dopamine, plays a role in producing and regulating positive feelings such as pleasure, hopefulness, optimism, and keen interest. When we have sufficient levels of this “feel good” neurotransmitter in our brain, we are more able to maintain motivation, delay gratification and feel rewarded and content. As levels of dopamine in the brain change, so does our outlook on life. Dopamine release is triggered during pleasure-inducing experiences including smelling and eating a favourite food, seeing friends, enjoying sports, solving a puzzle and accomplishing a task. Studies show that students who learn at a young age to connect the “feel good” times with positive behaviours are better able to access the self-soothing, internal reward system that comes as standard equipment in every human brain.