



Tips for Creating a Mindful Classroom Week 6

Observation practice and the self-regulation of emotions requires lots of mindful practice. Please plan to incorporate the following exercises into each day to reinforce these critical SEL skills.

1. Mindful Seeing Activity

- Spend a couple of minutes during a break in the school day to focus your student's attention on a small object like a stone, a leaf, or a shell. Take time to observe its color/s, shape, lines, and patterns.
- What do you notice about this object when you take the time to really focus on it?
- How did you respond to this exercise? What do you notice in yourself as you practice “seeing”?

2. Practice paying attention to your own emotions and sensations that arise throughout your day. This will help you understand what stress feels like and will give you the ability to manage it thoughtfully.

- If there is a particularly strong emotion, where do you feel it in the body? Notice if you are judging the emotion as good or bad.
- Notice if you're trying to avoid the strong emotion or feel compelled to immediately express it or act on it.
- Notice any thoughts that go along with the emotion. For example, “I'm angry because there is nothing I can do to get them to do their work.”

3. Practice mindfulness of emotions when interacting with individuals who bring up difficult emotions for you.

- For example, suppose there is one student who is disruptive and you sometimes address that child more harshly than you would like.
- Using mindfulness of emotions, set an intention around how to respond when the recurring difficult situation occurs. For example, you might set the intention “If that student starts talking when I'm speaking to the class, I will pause and be silent, tune in to my emotions for a few breaths, and then remind her as calmly as I can of the class rule to listen when someone else is speaking.”
- Give yourself what you would give to your student. Ask yourself: If my student or my child got angry like I am right now, what would I do in response? Maybe you need to give yourself a “time out.” If you can do this before you lose your temper, it's even better. This models boundaries for your kids and lets them see an adult who manages emotions well.