

I help myself feeling better



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/106327241176767866/>

AGE	3 – 6 years
VALUE	I protect myself
MATERIALS	A youtube video, “a parachute”, a feather, raisins, a plate
DURATION	20 minutes
GROUP SIZE	5 to 15 children
OBJECTIVES	To be able to concentrate, to develop a conscious habit of being "here and now", to respond appropriately to stressful situations, to strengthen mental health.
METHODOLOGY	role-play, a discussion, methodology of Mindfulness
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STEP BY STEP IMPLEMENTATION

These days children find it difficult to concentrate as their attention is disturbed by many factors such as colours, sounds and technology. The importance of learning to concentrate and focus on a small thing or phenomenon, for at least one minute is especially urgent from an early age. It is possible to develop the concentration of attention of 2-5-year-old children daily and thus to evolve a conscious habit of young people to be "here and now" also to respond appropriately to stressful situations. Calm breathing exercises using the Mindfulness methodology help to concentrate and focus children's attention.

Step 1

The facilitator invites children to sit in a circle on the carpet. Then the facilitator asks children:

Children, how do you behave when you are angry or tired? (Children describe their behaviour when they are angry).

While being angry or tired you should try to calm yourself down and relax. What do you do to calm yourself down? (Children share their experiences).

Step 2

Deep and slow breathing helps to calm down. Let's try to breathe slowly and calm down together.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLbK0o9Bk7Q>

(While watching the video, children learn to breathe calmly and deeply).

The facilitator asks the children:

How do you feel? (Children describe their feelings).

Did deep breathing help calm down a bit?

Step 3

The facilitator tells children that they will make tea for themselves.

Game "Tea".

The facilitator invites children to cross their legs (a butterfly pose), extend their arms forward, and hold their palms as if they were a bowl of tea. The facilitator points out that this cup contains hot, herbal-scented tea and offers to blow to make it warm. The facilitator reminds children to inhale through the nose, exhale the



air, blow it towards the tea through the mouth. Children repeat the exercise no more than five times not to feel dizzy. Then they check if the tea is not too hot.

(The method can be applied to regulate and correct behaviour when children feel anger, sadness, fear, confusion - this practice helps to focus and get concentrated on other activities.)

Step 4

(Before playing this game, you need to prepare the kids asking them not to rush, to calm down. This game needs to be played in calm movements, listening to yourself and friends, because raising a feather requires a gentle gust of wind, not a storm.)

Now let's play the game "**A Flying Feather**". Children take a parachute behind the edges (a sheet is also suitable). A feather is lying on it. Children move the parachute carefully so that the feather does not fall on the ground. (Children try to act carefully in equal movements. This exercise also helps to calm down and focus).

Step 5

The facilitator tells children that they are going to taste raisins and reminds children not to rush and listen carefully to the facilitator's instructions. The facilitator turns on relaxing music. The quiet music is on until the end of the session.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFZKK7K52uQ>

(Silent relaxing music is playing in the background).

Raisin method. The facilitator invites children to sit in a circle and puts a plate with raisins in the middle. There should be enough raisins to cover all the children in the group. The facilitator takes one raisin and offers to do the same for the children. Children hold the raisins in the palms outstretched in front of them and look at them in silence. The facilitator suggests children consider what a raisin reminds. Usually, young children want to express their thoughts aloud, so the facilitator asks to speak as quietly as possible and recalls one of the rules of the group. When one child speaks the others listen. Children smell the raisins and try to understand what the smell is. Children think or express their thoughts in whispers, quietly. Children are welcome to speak in turns. Then children bring the raisins to the ear and listen if they are saying something. Later, children put it in their mouths but don't chew. The facilitator invites children to feel the taste of a raisin, to keep it under or on the tongue. The facilitator asks to imagine that it is the tastiest delicacy in the world. Then children can bite a raisin carefully and slowly, without rushing, to feel the taste. The facilitator suggests the children chew the raisin slowly and feel it travelling to the stomach.

(It is possible that a child might chew and swallow a raisin immediately for the first time. It may be typical for 5 out of 15 children. If this happens, children who have eaten their raisins are encouraged to sit still and watch their friends. You can offer them another raisin. The raisin method could be applied at any time of the



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day, in a variety of situations. To make it more attractive raisins can be replaced with other small edible products such as peaches, apples or dried cranberries.)

When engaging children in raisin therapy, we should taste the raisins but not simulate eating.

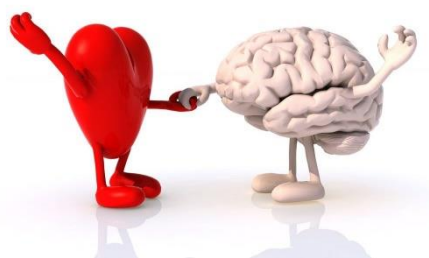




CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

OBSERVED BEHAVIOR	YES	NO	COMENTS
Children manage to concentrate and focus on being "here and now" for a longer time.			
Children know why it is so important to be able to control and calm themselves.			
Children know several ways to relax and they can apply them.			
Children know what helps them to calm down, but they do not apply it in practice.			
Some children find it very difficult to stay calm for a longer time.			

Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.
– Mahatma Gandhi



Self-care Hints for Childcare professionals and teachers:

Rather than engaging with technology immediately, spend time in the morning being in the moment, and thinking about your day.