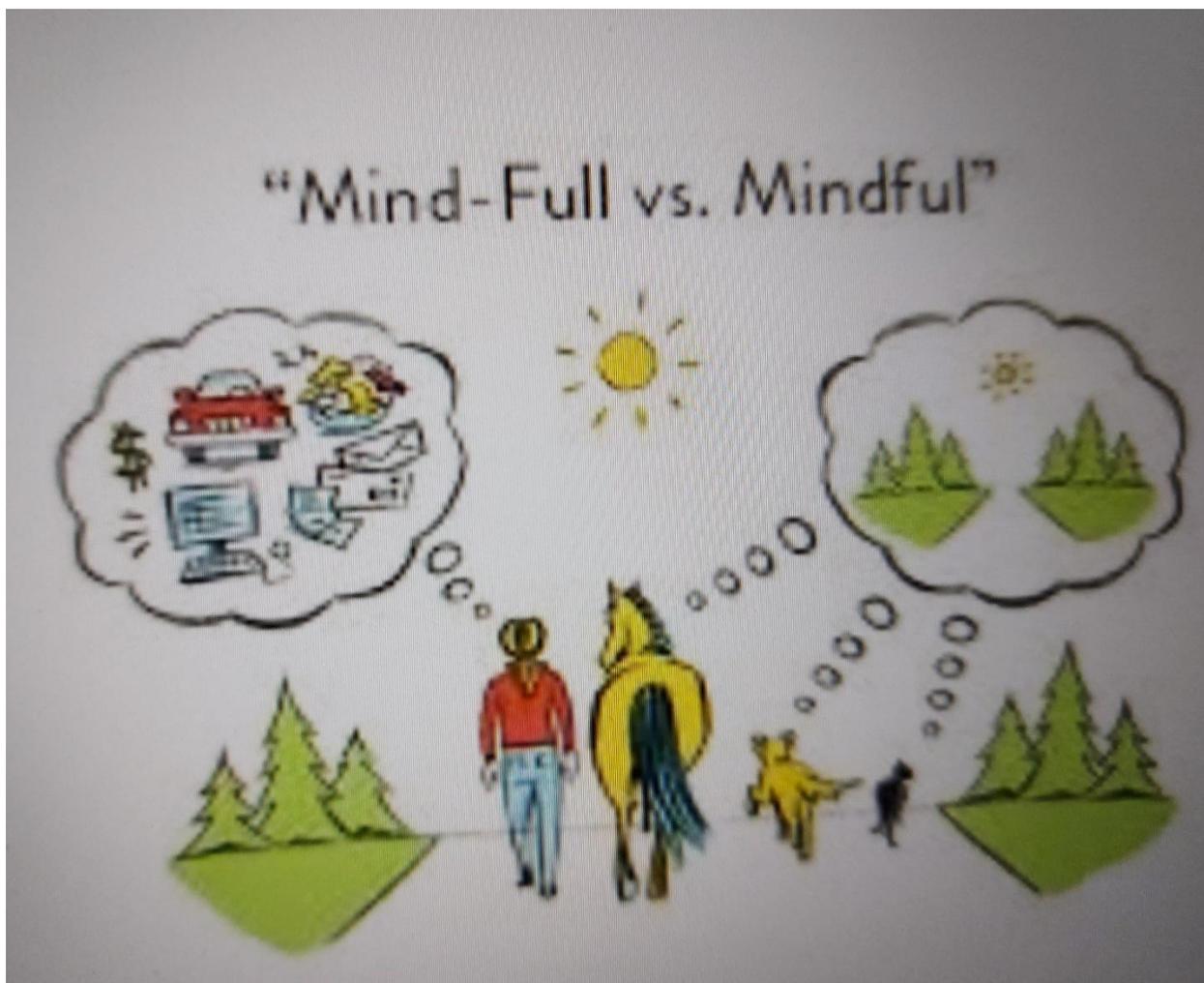


# Mindfulness and Insight

## As the Buddha Taught

### For the very young (Year 1 - First Term)



Radhika Abeysekera

**Cover design [www. mindful-connections.com](http://www.mindful-connections.com)**

**Pictures for stories – Grok**

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**For Kalin and Kaveen**

# **Mindfulness and Insight**

## **For the Very Young (Year 1- First Term)**

### **Preface**

This book was written for our grandson Kalin, to introduce him to some important concepts of the Buddha's teaching using stories and mindful activities. His vacation in Sri Lanka and visit to many significant Buddhist cities such as the temple of the sacred tooth relic in Kandy, Dambulla Caves and Bodhi tree, Samadhi Buddha statue, and the magnificent Stupas in Anuradhapura and questions encouraged the writing of this book. He was interested in the teachings and had already listened to many Buddhist stories and the life story of the Buddha.

There are many children in the West who do not have easy access to a temple for their young children's Dhamma knowledge. Most of the concepts that I have introduced were influenced by the most Venerable Dhammajiva Maha Thera's Mindfulness School - Sati Pasala, which he introduced to the West in 2016 and 2017. I had the good fortune to help out as a volunteer coordinator of International Sati Pasala for a few years at its inception. I have also included Kindness and the importance of morality, gratitude and generosity with a story, as they are a prerequisite for the practice of Mindfulness Meditation.

There is a difference between the introduction of the concepts of mindfulness to young children and the practice of Mindfulness Meditation to older children. Often the terms are used loosely as synonyms. The children's (6-8 beginners) class is for children starting grade school. Mindfulness is taught as a tool or resource for prevention of anxiety and stress. The minds of the very young are pure and they have not been conditioned by many concepts, thoughts and perception. Generally, they have not experienced stress, grief and lamentation. The parents are very protective and have shielded them from danger, crying and lamentation.

I remember my mother's advice, when she came to help with our first-born child. Crying is your baby's only way of letting you know that he is in distress or pain. We must then make sure that we find the cause of his distress and soothe him. Does he need feeding, changing of his diaper, warmth/cool, to be carried and burped, or just a cuddle and some rocking because he has forgotten how to sleep or had a bad dream? If none of these soothes the baby, and he is well (has no fever or a cold), take him to the doctor. It may be colic. We use gripe water in Sri Lanka, but you should take him to the doctor.

The parents protect their baby, toddler and child so that and he/she has a carefree life of selfless love and caring. The Buddha in his wisdom compares this love of a mother to her only child, to the kindness and compassion that we should spread in all directions to all beings in the discourse on loving kindness (metta sutta). Therefore, very young children

are with pure unconditioned innocent minds and naturally mindful. They do not generally have worries, and the stresses of a busy older child with exams and jam-packed daily lives. Sati Pasala was initiated for the very young as a tool to prevent anxiety/ stress and teach the child to cope with anxiety and not enhance or promote anxiety to stress.

The activities have been chosen carefully to move from the thinking mind to the feeling mind and encourage relaxation with fun activities and games. The stories are to encourage skilful qualities like kindness, caring, gratitude and sharing (generosity) that promotes happiness and mundane right view.

Children develop at their own pace. Let the child lead by encouraging sharing of his observations and views. Let him progress at his own pace. Listen to the child's views and body language. Adjust the time of the class and stories by simplifying and using your own words. I started with 45 minutes and only walking meditation. I found that even including a short introduction to awareness of breath meant that I had to drop the story. Ask the parent to read the story the following Sunday at the same time when he is rested. 45 minutes should be the maximum duration for the class. One hour was too much.

Also, live classes are best. It is harder to hold their attention through zoom. The child sharing that he is tired, or that his mind is restless (monkey mind) means that he is being mindful. This is what we are looking for at this age. Observation of the present moment with bare attention.

Change the words used in text as required to words that your child may know better. For example, the title of the story on day three was "The Proud Rose and Caring Cactus". At the end, when I asked the question, "Why was the rose called -The Proud Rose?" Kalin looked puzzled. I asked him if he knew the meaning of the word proud. And he said, "No". Often, we used the phrase "Good job Kalin, I am proud of you!". When he did something caring or skilful. Now, I was using the word proud on the rose who was not very nice. I changed the title to the "The Rude Rose and the Caring Cactus".

We moved the time of the Dhamma class so that it was not just after another class he attended. If possible, adjust the time to a suitable time for the child. We are learning to know the mind and shape/mold the mind. This is tiering work and requires great effort at the start. Include little treats along the way. This could be a wrapped candy or chocolate on the memory tray of day four or a coin for his piggy bank as treasure for the magic jar on day five. Be creative!

I had lots of fun teaching and writing this book for our grand son. I hope your child enjoys it as much as we did. The Wise Owl, Mindful Turtle and Happy Pirate helped us.

May all beings be happy and well!

Radhika Abeysekera  
December 2025

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# Mindfulness and Insight School

## Beginner - 7 to 8 years

### Overview Year 1 and 2

1. Mindfulness or Awareness
2. What the Buddha Taught
3. How to be Happy
4. Moving from the Thinking Mind to the Observing & Feeling Mind
5. Introduce impermanence, suffering and not-self

### 1. What is Mindfulness or Awareness (Functioning of Six Faculties)

1. Being Aware when Seeing - Faculty of Eye
2. Being Aware when Hearing - Faculty of Ear
3. Being Aware when Smelling - Faculty of Nose
4. Being Aware when Tasting - Faculty of Tongue
5. Being Aware when Feeling - Faculty of Body
6. Being Aware when Perceiving (Mind Objects) - Faculty of Mind

### 2. What the Buddha Taught (compassion, kindness, mindfulness, wisdom)

1. Do not hurt anyone (person or animal)
2. Be kind and caring to all (persons and animals)
3. Be Mindful (Sitting, walking, standing, lying down and daily activities)
4. Purify the Mind through Awareness (Wisdom Training)

### 3. How to be Happy

1. Look for the silver lining
2. Count your Blessings
3. Gratitude
4. Happy thoughts
5. Letting go
6. Other (help someone in need, have good friends etc.)

#### **4. Moving from the Thinking Mind to the Feeling Mind**

1. Activity or Game (15 minutes)
2. Short Story (Followed by Q and A, 15 minutes)
3. Mindful Walking (5-10 minutes based on age)
4. Mindful Sitting (5-10 minutes based on age)

#### **5. Introduce Impermanence, Stress, Not-self**

1. Introduce impermanence, gently with the falling of leaves, fading of flower, starting a new school, moving etc. Ask the child to give examples.
2. Change maybe stressful. How does child feel about going to a new school? Somethings can not be controlled. Acceptance by looking at the positive.
3. Examples of things that can not be controlled. Skilful deeds can help.

#### **6. Home Work (with parents)**

1. Review material covered in previous class with child
2. Mindful Walking daily with child (1-2 times a day)
3. Mindful Sitting daily with child (1-2 times a day)
4. Example of an act of kindness, caring or gratitude
5. Example of a day-to-day activity done in Mindfulness/Awareness

#### **7. Videos for Enhanced learning**

**Mindful Walking - Dinky Thinky Productions (2 minutes)**

<https://share.google/Dw9IW7umOwat6ahP0>

**Mindful Walking - Venerable Master Niels (5 Minutes)**

<https://youtu.be/zZd4RHqe96w?si=HUpCWahHo25qG5Rk>

**Mindful Breathing - Dinky Thinky Productions (4 minutes)**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=soO1uS9ccTU&feature=shared>

**Calming with Breathing - Love2Learn (5 minutes)**

<https://share.google/tqhtaFqmlR3EKxc7j>

## Day 1 (45 minutes)

### 1. Introduce Mindfulness

Sati Pasala = Mindfulness School

Sati = Mindfulness = Awareness = Attention

Sati = being fully aware of whatever you are doing when using the five sense faculties.

### 2. Introduce five sense faculties (bases) and their function (what it produces).

Eye-> Seeing

Ear-> Hearing

Nose-> Smelling

Tongue-> Tasting

Body-> Feeling (sensing)

Kalin knew his five sense bases and their function. Introduced the term sense faculty (*ayatana* in Pali) as a synonym to sense base. Example, faculty of engineering produces engineers, and medical faculty produces physicians, etc.

We must try to do all our activities mindfully. Then you do not need extra time to be mindful. We will try to be mindful when walking, brushing our teeth, eating, biking, crossing the road etc.

#### **4. Activity - Make a Paper Boat**

Take a coloured paper and fold slowly showing each step mindfully.

**Insert Photo of Boat**

**Learning - Mindful listening, seeing, and following instruction.**

#### **5. Mindful Walking (5 minutes)**

Select a walking path of 20 to 30 steps.

Walk Slowly-Mindfully-Silently (SMS).

Focus on feeling on the sole of foot and area around feet and legs.

#### **6. Story - (The Caring Son and his Old Mother)**

A long, long time ago there was a poor wood cutter who looked after his old mother by cutting down and selling dry fire wood. They lived in a small hut in the forest. Realizing that the money he made was not enough to make a comfortable life for his mother and himself, he takes a job as a deck hand in a merchant boat. The mother was very sad to let him go and afraid to be alone. She asked if she too could join the boat and work as a cook. The owners of the boat agreed.

They set sail on a beautiful sunny day and a calm sea. All was well until a strong wind storm resulted in large waves and a rough sea. The boat rocked from side to side and water poured onto the deck. The son realized that the boat would capsize and his mother who could not swim would drown. Asking his mother to get on his back and hold tight, he jumped into the rough sea. Then, with great effort and determination he swam towards a distant island. His arms ached and his body was cold and battered by the waves. Finally, the exhausted son drags himself and his mother onto the island and falls asleep.



He had saved his mother's life. Thanking her son with tears in her eyes she hugged her son and said, "Just as you saved me from suffering and death and gave me the freedom of life, may you be a Supreme Buddha and take living beings across this samsāric journey of suffering to freedom." Her joyous wish for him, sparks an interest in her son. He makes the First Mental Intention of becoming a Supreme Buddha.

Introduce helping others in need, gratitude and happiness of mother and son. Let child play with the boat "on a deep rough sea". Introduce anchoring of the boat to steady and stabilize it in water.

## **Learning - Gratitude and caring for others leads to happiness**

(Introduce Perfection of Compassion, Kindness, Gratitude, Determination, effort)

Q1 Why did the son decide to take a job in the merchant boat?

Q2 Why did he agree to take his old mother with him on the boat?

Q3 What qualities did the son have and use when he decided to swim with his mother on his back to the island and save her life?

## **7. Briefly Introduce Mindful Breathing (Information for Parent. Mindful Breathing to be introduced gradually)**

- We use the breath to anchor and stabilize the monkey mind that moves from one object to another like a boat in a rough sea. We begin by relaxing the body using body scan and move from thinking mind to feeling mind.
- We observe feeling any where in the body. Then focus on feeling of breath going in and out on the area around the nose and upper lip or in stomach.
- We anchor the wandering monkey mind to the body (touch of the breath) to stabilize the mind like the example of the boat.

## **Home work - Day 1**

One example of mindfulness and one of happiness when helping another.

Place foot on heating vent and let child feel the warmth of heat on the sole of the foot. Similarly, place foot on vent when the air conditioner is on, so the child can feel the cool air blowing,

5 minutes mindful walking once a week or when possible.

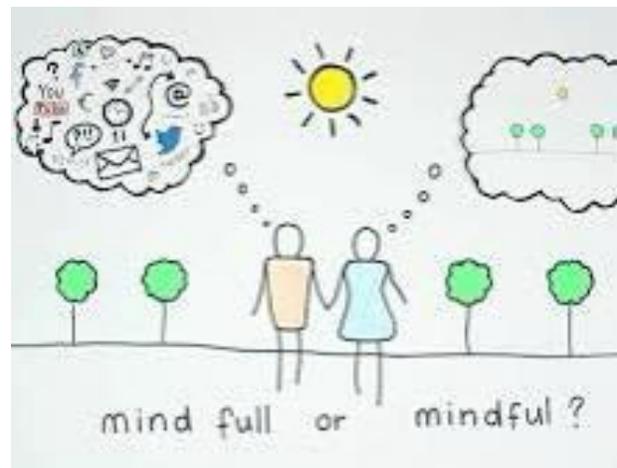
## Day 2 (45minutes)

### 1. Review Home Work (Day 1)

Mindfulness in daily life and act of caring, sharing, or gratitude practiced.

Mindful walking.

### 2. Mind Full vs Mindful



Ask child to explain his understanding of mindfulness

### **3. Activity - Feeling**

Take a Grocery bag or pillow case. Put 5 items inside which have different textures that the child has not seen or played with recently.

Examples: An object that is:

Soft, Heavy/Light, Rough, Prickly, Smooth, Hot/Cold, Wet etc.

Ask the child to close his eyes and take one. Then with eyes closed touch the object with both hands and describe what he feels. He must not try to identify the object. He must instead focus on what he feels.

### **Learning - Moving from thinking to feeling**

#### **4. Mindful Walking**

Play Video

<https://youtu.be/EVTwJIvT88M> (2 minutes)

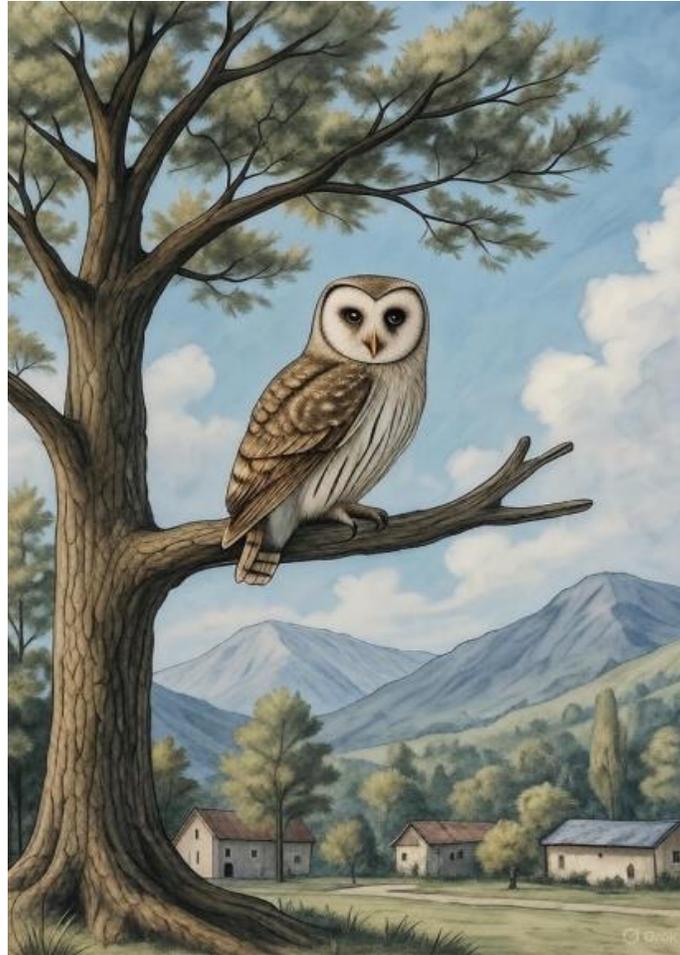
**(Thinky Dinky Production)**

Check if child has questions? Followed by practice (5 minutes)

#### **5. Story - The Wise Old Owl**

A long, long, time ago, there was an old owl that lived in a large tree at the edge of a village. He had a good view of the village and often, the villagers gathered around his tree to rest and share stories.

One day he saw a boy help an old man carry a basket. One day he heard a young girl yell at her mother. He heard a woman cry because her house had been robbed and saw how her kind friends consoled her by offering food and clothes. He saw a man hiding among the bushes walking stealthily with a pillow case full of stolen goods looking back to make sure he was not being followed. The wise owl remained silent and shook his head.



He heard that an elephant had broken the fence and trampled the rice fields causing great loss to the farmer. But later, he saw a group of men with tools and poles go towards the rice field to mend the fence. He also saw a woman hit her maid because she had dropped and broken a valuable pot, and a boy helping a little girl who had fallen. He observed the various happenings with great interest and silence. The more he saw the less he spoke. Instead, he observed, listened, and reflected on the happenings of each day.

**Wise Owl's Learning - Life was full of ups and downs. Some of the people were getting better and some others were getting worse. But he, the old owl, had become wiser, each, and every day.**

Q1. Give some (of 4) incidents where people were getting better?

Q2. Give some (of 4) incidents where people were getting worse?

Q3. How was the old owl getting wiser each, and every day? (4 ways)

## **Home Work - Day 2**

Example of mindfulness in daily life.

Act of caring, sharing, or gratitude.

Check on child's understanding of mindfulness.

## Day 3 (45minutes)

### 1. Review Home Work (Day 2)

Example of mindfulness in daily life.

Act of caring or gratitude.

Child's understanding of, mindfulness?

Mindfulness = Non - Judgemental Present Moment Awareness with kindness.

Mindfulness = Bare Attention

Mindfulness = Choiceless Awareness

Today I am going to tell you a story about a mindful turtle and a fox. They both lived in a forest near a lake. The turtle had climbed out of the water into the open grass land and was enjoying the sun. The fox was looking for its breakfast and saw the slow-moving turtle. Sensing danger, the turtle looked up and saw the hungry fox. The turtle knew that the fox would catch him before he could get back into the safety of the lake. His only safe place was its shell.

The wise turtle, tucked its head and four limbs into the shell and remained very silent. The fox ran up to him and sniffed the turtle. He tried to bite through the hard shell. Then he walked around the turtle to find a soft place that he could bite. The fox hit at the turtle with its paw but the shell was hard and heavy. He could not get the turtle. The fox remained close to the turtle without moving.

The turtle could smell the fox and knew that he was close. He was hungry and thirsty but he remained inside the shell patiently without moving. Instead, the wise turtle directed its attention to its breath and observed his changing breath in silence. At the beginning his breath was quick and sharp, then slow and calm.

Today we are going to be like the turtle. We are going to sit comfortably and keep our body still and silent. Then we are going to take a deep breath in and slowly let it out. Can you feel your breath going in to your body and coming out? Good! Please close your eyes. Let's take one more deep breath and slowly let it out. We are going to keep our attention on the breath and just observe the breath going in and out of the body patiently for a few minutes just like the turtle. Pretend to be the turtle. We do not want the fox to catch us. Do not move. Keep silent..... Good Job. Now slowly open your eyes. What did you feel?

## **2. Activity - Children's Yoga, (5 times each)**

Slowly, Mindfully and Silently with Kindness (SMSK)

1 Neck, shoulders (4 directions, 2 directions)

2 Arms (3 exercises)

3 Waist (2 directions)

4 Legs (2 exercises)

5 foot (Circle 2 directions)

6 Body (all over)

**Learning - Mindful listening, follow directions, slow, mindful movements. Introduce non-judgemental observation with kindness. Reduce the number of repetition if child seems tired.**

## **3. Mindful Walking**

Share video. Introduce SMSK - Find a walking strip or corridor 20 steps long. Stand in silence and take a deep breath, let go of the air slowly, keep hands together in front or behind. Keep your eyes open, and on the floor about 3 feet in front of you. Walk 20 steps. Focus your awareness on feet and feeling/sensations on feet, turn, slowly and walk back. Repeat for five minutes. Check if the child has any questions.

<https://youtu.be/zZd4RHqe96w?si=HUpCWahHo25qG5Rk>

#### 4. Story - The Rude Rose and The Kind Cactus

A long, long time ago a rose bush and a cactus plant were living side by side in a desert. The rose bush was full of beautiful roses. The cactus was full of sharp thorns. People often admired the beautiful roses and commented on its beauty. The rose bush was very pleased with its good looks. It began to tease and laugh at the cactus. The other plants tried to defend the cactus, but the rose was too delighted with its own good looks. It kept bullying the cactus.



That summer was very hot. There was no rain at all. The rose bush began to wither and drop its flowers and leaves. The cactus did well in the hot sun and became a feeding place for thirsty birds. The grateful birds thanked the cactus and sang songs of joy.

The thirsty rose bush asked the cactus for some water. The kind cactus forgave the insults and bullying of the rose bush and gave it some water. The rose bush was ashamed of its rude behaviour.

**Learning - Do not judge others by their looks.  
Forgive and be kind to those who have wronged you.**

Q 1 Why was the rose known as the Rude Rose?

Q 2 Why were the birds singing with joy?

Q 3 Do you think the rose bush changed its unkind behaviour?

### **5. Three Breaths with Kindness**

Introduce universal kindness, and harmonize with the in and out breath. Take a deep breath and let the air out slowly. Silently wish kindness to yourself and others after each breath as follows:

May I be happy, well, and, peaceful.

May all beings be happy, well and peaceful.

### **6. Home Work - Day 3**

Example of mindfulness in daily life.

Act of caring, sharing, or gratitude.

5 minutes of mindful walking.

## Day 4 (45minutes)

### 1. Review Home Work (Day 3)

Example of mindfulness in daily life and act of caring, sharing, or gratitude.

Mindful Walking.

Today I am going to introduce you to the happy, mindful, pirate. His name is Skip. He learnt to be mindful because it helped him to sail safely in the ocean, spot whales and dolphins that he liked to watch, and helped him to find treasure. Mindfulness also helped Skip with his emotions when he was sad, afraid, anxious, frustrated or angry. He used his spy glass to focus his attention.

Skip was a kind, caring and generous pirate. He found lost treasures that were buried in the sea, sold them and gave the money to the poor and needy. We will learn mindfulness from skip the happy, mindful, pirate.



**Skip the pirate speaking:** Please sit in a comfortable position. Keep your hands together on your lap and slowly close your eyes. Direct your attention to the body and feel your body (any place, for a few minutes). Now take a deep breath, hold it for a few seconds and slowly let it out. Use your mind like a spy glass and direct your attention either on the area of the nose/upper lip or the tummy. Choose the place where you feel the in-breath and out-breath well. Then repeat the slow breathing in and out (three times).

**Learning - Share your experiences of feeling in the body and mind (sensations and emotions). Where did you feel the breath?**

## **2. Activity - Memory Game**

Explain the game to the child. Take a tray and place eight different items including a treat on it. Let the child see the tray for 3-4 minutes. Take the tray away. Ask the child to identify the objects that were on the tray.

**Learning - Mindful Seeing. Improve memory. Mindful eating of treat.**

## **3. Mindful Walking**

Stand still at the beginning of the Walking Path. Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Release your breath slowly. Repeat. Open eyes, place hands together in front or behind. Walk Slowly, Mindfully, and Silently with kindness (SMSK.) Focus your attention on the sole of your feet. Be aware of the feeling or sensation on feet as and when it touches the ground. Turn at the end of the path and walk back. It is normal for the mind to wonder to other objects. Bring it gently back to the sensation on the sole of your feet.

## **4. Story - The Angry Boy**

A Long, long time ago there was a young boy named Tommy, who had a very bad temper. He was yelling and fighting with everyone. His friends talked to him and said that his behaviour was hurtful, and not nice, but he listened to no one.

One day Tommy was waiting his turn to go on the slide in the park. When the little girl in front of him was scared and took time, he pushed her down the slide and she started to cry. Another day Tommy grabbed the ball from a boy and yelled at him for not giving it to him when he asked for the ball. *Tommy always wanted to have his own way.*

Before long, his friends started to distance themselves from the angry boy. They did not want to play with Tommy at the park. When his mother spoke to him about his hurtful behaviour, he said he was sorry, but he did not change.

One day when his mother was cooking, he asked her if he could have ice cream. When she said he could have ice cream after dinner which will be ready shortly, he yelled at her in anger. His father was very disappointed with his behaviour. He had a talk with his son to find out what was bothering him. Tommy said that he did not know the reason, but that he was very angry with everyone as none of his friends liked him.

Tommy's father wanted to help his son. He sat down next to Tommy, put his arm around his shoulders, and asked, "Would you like it if someone yelled at you, pushed you, or grabbed your toy?" Tommy said no, that he would not like it at all. His father then explained to him that no one likes to be yelled at and bullied, may be that is why you feel that that your friends do not like you.

Tommy's father gave him a small hammer and a bag of nails and took him to their backyard fence. He asked Tommy to hammer a nail into the fence every time he lost his temper and yelled or hurt someone. Before long the back fence was full of nails. Tommy was shocked to see that there were days when he had hammered five nails into the fence.

He made a great effort to be caring, kind and not get angry when he did not have his own way. Little by little the number of nails that he had to hammer reduced. Then one day he realized that he had not got angry even once. He was very happy. He took his father to the fence and showed him the fence with all the nails and how the number per day had slowly reduced.

His father and mother were very happy. His father said, "This is very good. But I want to make sure that you keep it up." I want you to remove a nail for every day that passes without you getting angry.



This was a lot of work. It was easy to hammer a nail into the fence especially when he was frustrated and angry. But taking it out was not easy. His father showed Tommy how to take out the nails. He agreed and began removing the nails whenever he had a day without anger.

Tommy realized that it was much more fun at the park as his friends were slowly coming back and playing with him. Then one day he was invited for a play date with a boy. He had a very good time with his friend. Tommy wanted to invite his friend to his home. When the last nail was removed, he took his mother and father to the fence and showed them the fence. They hugged him and praised him for his determination and hard work.

Then his father showed Tommy the holes in the fence made from all the nails he had hammered each time he got angry. He said 'You have done well son, but look at the holes you have left? These holes are like the hurt and pain you caused others when

you lost your temper and got angry. It takes a long time to heal. Remember this fence and never say or do anything to hurt anyone." Before long Tommy was inviting his friends' home for play dates. He had changed from being an angry hurtful child who always wanted his own way, to a kind and caring child. Tommy was happy as he had many friends.

**Learning - Before you say or do anything make sure that your words and actions do not hurt yourself or any other person.**

Q1 What was the main reason why Tommy was losing his friends?

Q2 How did his father help him to change?

Q3 What happened when Tommy changed from being an angry hurtful child to a kind and caring child (2 results)?

## **5. Breathing with Calm and Kindness**

**Calming with Breathing - Love2Learn (5 minutes)**

<https://share.google/tqhtaFqmlR3EKxc7j>

Introduce universal kindness, and harmonize with the in and out breath. Take a deep breath and let the air out slowly. Silently wish kindness to yourself and others after each breath as follows:

May I be happy, well and peaceful.

May all beings be happy, well and peaceful.

## **6. Home Work - Day 4**

One act of caring, sharing, or gratitude. Five minutes of mindful walking.

Encourage child to walk mindfully when he walks to school or the park with family.

## Day 5 (45minutes)

### 1. Review Home Work (Day 4)

Example of mindfulness in daily life.

Practice of walking meditation.

Act of caring or gratitude.

### 2. Activity - Clarity of mind using a magic jar, water and soil.

We will use a \$2 coin- (twoney in Canada) as the happy pirate's treasure. You can use any coin that you have in your country.

Take the empty jam jar. Add water until the jar is about three quarters full. Close the lid and place the bottle on the coin of your choice. You can see the coin clearly at the bottom of the jar.

The water is clear and pure, like a still, quiet mind. Similarly, when your mind is not cluttered with a lot of stuff, it becomes calm and clear. You can see mind objects (thoughts, ideas, feelings etc.) clearly. The pure, clear water is like your mind when you are mindful.

Put a **little** soil into the bottle, close the bottle, and shake it well. The water is cloudy and no longer clear. Place the bottle on the coin it cannot be seen. The cloudy water is like a busy mind. A mind that is full. It is not a mind that is clear and mindful.

Let the bottle stand for 5 minutes and observe the jar silently. The dirt and soil have settled at the bottom and the water is clear again. Can you see \$2 coin (Canadian)? Can you see the dirt and soil at the bottom?

You can have a clear quiet mind by keeping your body still and observing how the soil settles down slowly. When your mind is clear like the water you will feel calm and peaceful. If you had a lot of soil settle down at the bottom of jar, you may not see the coin. But if you had only a little soil in your bottle, you may see the coin or part of the coin at the bottom. That is how skip the pirate found treasure. By practicing mindfulness each and every day so that he had less and less soil in his mind.

Learning - The clear water is like an uncluttered mind with no dirt and soil (impurities). When the mind gets busy and cluttered you can calm it down by being still and watching the jar.

This jar can be used by the child to remind him to be calm when he is anxious, frustrated or angry. Keep the jar in a safe place that is easy for child to access. This is his magic jar it helps to calm his mind. It can also be used to help his family to be calm and peaceful.

### 3. Mindful walking

Stand still at the beginning of the walking path. Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Release your breath slowly. Repeat. Open eyes, place hands together in front or behind. Walk Slowly, Mindfully, and Silently with Kindness. Focus your attention on the sole of your feet. Be aware of the feeling or sensation on feet as and when it touches the ground. Turn at the end of the path and walk back. Remember to be kind to yourself. If the mind wanders bring it gently back to the sole of your feet.

### 4. The Story - The Eagle and the Tiny Bird

A long, long time ago, there was a tiny baby bird that did not listen to his parents. Instead of staying safe in his shelter, known as his happy place<sup>1</sup>, that his parents had provided for him in the field, he walked out into the open and ran all over the freshly plowed field. He did not listen to his parents' advice when they told him that bigger birds and animals will catch him and not to run out of his happy place.

A hungry eagle who was circling over the field looking for food, was attracted by the movement of the tiny bird. Usually he liked to eat rabbits, large fish, and bigger animals so that he could fill his stomach and rest for a few days between hunts. But he was fascinated by the speed of this tiny bird that was bold enough to run in an open field. He swooped down, picked up the tiny bird in his claws, and soared up back into the sky.

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<sup>1</sup> Piya Urumaya – Parental Heritage (literal translation). Like a bunker being a safe place at times of a tornado. Synonym by the Buddha for the Satipathāna Sutta which when practice appropriately leads to Freedom from Suffering (happiness). **Note: Translation used for kids is Happy Place.**



The baby bird knew he was in trouble. He cried out, at the top of his voice "Oh what an unskilful and foolish bird I am, I have no merit at all. I should have listened to my parents and stayed in my happy place. Then, this old eagle would never have caught me." The Eagle was curious of the baby bird's cries. What was this happy place he is talking about? He wanted to see the baby bird's happy place.

Then his arrogance surfaced and he thought. "Who does this tiny bird think he is? This tiny bird can not get away from me. I will let him show me this happy place and catch him later. He will be a tasty treat for me until I find a bigger prey.

Swooping down, the eagle dropped off the tiny bird back into the field and asked him to show his happy place. The field that was ploughed had large lumps of clay under which the tiny bird could hide safely. The bird ran into his closest happy place. A small shelter under a mound of clay in the freshly ploughed field. His parents had showed him the safe shelter and warned him not to run outside in the field when they went looking for food. Then coming out so that the eagle could see him he yelled at the eagle "This is my happy place. Come and get me if you can?" The eagle circled gathered speed, then swooped down to where the tiny bird stood with no fear. The bird remembered his parents' teaching. Waiting until the eagle was about to land he scuttled into its shelter, his happy place. The eagle crashed into the hard ground beside him. The baby bird ran back to its parents and decided that he would never disobey his parents again.

**Learning** - Your parents care for you and your safety. Listen to their advice. Do not panic when you are in trouble. Keep calm and find a way out. Can you remember the mindful turtle's happy place? Yes, it's his shell. The tiny birds happy place is under the large clump of clay. What is your happy place?

Q1 Why did the Eagle decide to go after the tiny bird which was not big enough for a meal?

Q2 What was the baby bird's happy place?

Q3 How did the bird trick the eagle into letting him go?

## **5. Three Breaths with Kindness**

Introduce universal kindness, and harmonize with the in and out breath. Take a deep breath and let the air out slowly. Silently wish kindness to yourself and others after each breath as follows:

May I be happy, well, and peaceful

May all beings be happy, well, and peaceful

## **6. Home Work - Day 5**

Example of mindfulness in daily life and an act of caring or gratitude.

Example of when the child used the magic jar.

Mindful walking three to four times a week in school or at home.

## Day 6 (45 minutes)

### 1. Review Home Work (Day5)

Example of using magic jar and mindfulness in daily life.

Act of caring, sharing or gratitude.

Mindful Walking.

### 2. Activity - Observing Change (in flickering flame and level of water)

**A. Required:** Glass desert bowl. Tall glass (tumbler). four-inch candle or birthday candle. Lighter. Some water.

#### **B. Instructions:**

Melt bottom of candle carefully with lighter and stand it firmly on dessert bowl. Add a little water to cover  $\frac{1}{4}$  the height of candle, making sure wick does not get covered. Carefully light the candle. Let child observe flame for a few minutes. Place tumbler over lit candle. Watch the flame of candle and water level carefully and share your observations.

Q1 Describe the changes in the candle flame. Were the changes quick or slow.

Q2 Describe changes in water.

Q3 What do you think has happened inside the tall glass?

**Learning - Mindful Listening, Seeing and Following instructions. Careful observation, reflection and insight as to what has happened inside the tall glass.**

### **3. Mindful Walking**

Stand still at the beginning of the walking path. Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Release your breath slowly. Repeat. Open eyes, place hands together in front or behind. Walk Slowly, Mindfully and Silently with kindness. Focus your attention on the sole of your feet. Be aware of the feeling or sensations on feet as and when it touches the ground. Turn at the end of the path and walk back. Repeat.

### **4. Story - The Tofu Seller and His Young Son**

A Long, Long time ago, there was a father and son who lived near a soybean farm in the mountains of Japan. The father would make fresh tofu and deliver them to customers who lived in the village at the base of the mountain.

He would take his tofu in a metal box full of water and pull his cart with the tofu carefully making sure that none of the tofu was damaged. After some time, the father realised that it was getting difficult for him to pull his cart. The old man started to train his young twelve-year-old son, Takumi, to pull a little practice cart on weekends.

Takumi had to get up at 6.00 am to get all his deliveries done on time. He liked to sleep late on weekends. Takumi decided to run all the way down, so that he could come back and sleep longer.

The cart swayed left and right as Takumi ran down the mountain. On the first day he was dismayed to find that all the tofu was damaged. He felt very sad as his old father worked very hard to earn a living and pay for his schooling. He decided to help his father to make another batch of tofu. He also got up early to watch how his father made the deliveries on weekdays.

Takumi observed his father carefully. He realised that his father knew every curve, pot hole, and boulder on the path down the mountain. He walked at a brisk but steady rate. He never took his eyes off the path. And, he was silent. This was unusual as he was very fond of his son and often chatted with him when he came back from school.



Takumi had walked down the mountain many times with his father and friends. But he had always chatted with friends or run down the mountain as he was in a rush. The next week he walked down the mountain to his school mindfully. He looked at the path and saw every curve, pothole, and boulder on the path. The next weekend, Takumi offered to take the practice delivery. He remembered how his father anticipated and avoided pot holes and boulders. He remembered how his father swayed with the cart when he navigated the curves. He followed his father's example.

Takumi was surprised to find that he had done all his practice deliveries on time and the tofu was in perfect condition. He began to enjoy the early morning delivery of weekend tofu. He was everyone's favourite delivery boy.

The winding river glistened in the morning sun. The cherry blossoms and wild flowers danced in the gentle breeze and their fragrance wafted through the air. The sunbirds sang their songs of welcome. Taking a deep breath, Takumi smiled and focused on the path down the mountain. He did not take his eyes off the path.

Takumi was a teenager now, and running down the mountain with his father's big cart. But his tofu delivery was always in perfect condition. His father continued to guide and correct him if he made any mistakes. Takumi always listened to him. He knew that his father loved him and had his best interest in mind. That is how Takumi became the fastest long-distance runner in their village.

**Learning - You need to be mindful in whatever you do, to do it well. Helping one's parents' when they are in need is a meritorious and skillful deed.**

Q1 Why did Takumi run down the mountain on his first day?

Q2 What did he do to learn how to deliver the tofu in perfect condition?

Q3 How did he become the fastest long-distance runner in the village?

## **5. Mindful Breathing and Kindness**

Introduce mindful breathing with video (4 minutes).

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=soO1uS9ccTU&feature=shared>

### **Dinky Think Productions**

End with universal kindness, and harmonize with the in and out breath. Take a deep breath and let the air out slowly. Silently wish kindness to yourself and others after each breath as follows:

May I be happy, well, and peaceful

May all beings be happy, well, and peaceful

Encourage child to share his/her feelings

## **6. Home Work - Day 6**

Example of mindfulness in daily life.

Act of caring, sharing or gratitude.

Mindful Walking.

Watch Mindful breathing video

## Day 7 (45 minutes)

### 1. Review Home Work (Day 6)

Example of mindful in daily life and act of caring, sharing, or gratitude.

Share his experience of mindful breathing or mindful walking.

### 2. Activity - Where was the Buddha Born?

Print a copy of the World Map with the Five continents.

Ask the child to identify and mark the Country in which the child lives and India where the Buddha was born. Use the atlas. Find and mark the following cities on India:

Nepal (Lumbini) - where Buddha was born

Buddha Gaya - where he attained Enlightenment

Saranath (Varanasi) - where he gave his first talk

Kusinara - where he passed away

### Home Work

Use a ruler and draw the Buddhist Flag and colour it.



The Buddhist flag first raised, in Sri Lanka in 1885 is a modern symbol of faith and peace. It represents the colours of the Buddha's aura and is used globally to represent Buddhism, with its six colors symbolizing different aspects of Buddhist principles like compassion, purity of mind, kindness, the Middle Way, and wisdom.

The column of all colours represents the universality of the Buddha's teaching which is accepting of and open to all nationalities, religions, creeds and gender.

### **3. Mindful Breathing - Introduce Mindful breathing (4 minutes video)**

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=soO1uS9ccTU&feature=shared>

#### **Dinky Thinky Kids Productions**

Remind the child that we use breath to anchor and stabilize the monkey mind that moves from one object to another like a boat in a rough sea (day 1 activity). Please sit comfortably and relax. Gently close your eyes. Do you know that you are sitting? We begin by relaxing the body using a body scan to move from thinking mind to feeling mind.

Let us observe feeling anywhere in the body. Where can you feel a sensation in your body? Good. Please focus on the feeling of breath going in and out of the area around the nose, upper lip or in the area of the stomach. Share where you felt the breath.

### **4. Story - The Farmer, His Wife and Daughter**

A long, long time ago, there was a hardworking farmer and his wife who lived in a small house in the village. They had a young daughter named Maria who was very hard to please. She was never happy with the food her mother prepared or the clothes that she made which were sewn with great love and care. Her mother did the best they could for their daughter with the little money they had but she always compared herself with the other girls and wanted more.

The farmer and his wife were sad because they worked very hard to give their daughter the best they could to make her happy. They wanted to surprise her for her birthday with the doll she had seen and wanted.

The mother decided to take a part time cleaning job for an elderly neighbour to earn some extra money. Then, eating less food herself, she made sure that she gave the best food to Maria and her husband, who worked hard in the field.

However, there had been no rain this year and their harvest was poor. The little money they made was hardly enough for their food and basic needs. They knew that they would not be able to buy the doll for Maria's birthday. When the elderly neighbour heard of their situation, she gave them one of her daughter's old dolls that was in good condition. The farmer and his wife thanked her and were very happy.

They waited eagerly for Maria's birthday and her mother sewed a new dress for the doll. But when they gave it to their daughter, she complained that this was an old doll and not the doll she wanted. Her father decided that it was time to teach Maria some life lessons.

The farmer asked Maria to bring three small pots, an egg, a large potato, and some tea leaves. He filled the pots with some water and asked her to put the egg, the potato, and tea leaves into each of the pots. He then made a fire and put the pots on the fire until the water boiled and food and the tea were ready. Asking Maria to peel the potato and shell the egg he strained the tea leaves and poured the tea into a glass. Then, taking some milk, he made a meal of boiled egg, mashed potato, and milk tea for his daughter.



He said, "We had a soft, raw egg, a hard, raw potato, and some tea leaves. You now have a delicious meal. It is all about your attitude. We too could have complained that all we had was a raw egg, a potato, and some tea leaves. Instead, we made the best of what we had." He then told Maria how hard her mother and he had worked to give her food, clothes, a good education, and a doll with a new dress for her birthday.

Maria was ashamed of her behaviour. She asked her father and mother to forgive her and thanked them for all they had done for her so that she could go to a good school, have good nourishing food, clothes, and a happy birthday. She realized how much her parents loved her and how hard they worked to make her happy. Maria changed her ways and learnt to accept and be grateful for all that they did for her.

**Learning - Look for the silver lining in every cloud. Be grateful for what you have.**

Q 1 What did the mother do to make sure Maria had food, clothing, and a happy birthday?

Q 2 How and what did the father teach his daughter?

Q 3 What did Maria learn?

## **5. Mindful Walking**

Change your walking path. Walk on carpet instead of tile or hard-wood. Walk outside if weather permits. Share your observation and feelings

## **6. Home Work - Day 7**

Example of mindfulness in daily life.

Act of caring, sharing, or gratitude

Mindful walking followed by Mindful breathing (use videos as required).

## Day 8 (45minutes)

### 1.Home Work - Day 7

Example of mindfulness in daily life.

Act of caring, sharing, or gratitude

Mindful Walking followed by Mindful breathing.

### 2.Activity - Taste of Sweet and Sour

One dried raisin and one dried cranberry

Identifying taste without identifying the object.

Introduce taste briefly. Explain activity to child. Ask the child to close his eyes and hold out his left hand. Place the raisin on his palm. With eyes closed ask him to use the fingers of the right hand and feel the texture shape etc. of object in hand. He must not identify the object. Ask him to open his mouth and place the object on his tongue. Ask child not to chew the object. Just move it around in his mouth and try to identify the taste of the object without verbalizing. Then chew object and swallow it. Now, he can verbalize the taste of the object. (expected answer sweet)

Instruct the child to continue keeping eyes closed. Place the dried cranberry in his palm. Repeat as before in the same manner. As before, just move it around in the mouth and try to identify the taste of the object but do not verbalize. Then chew object and swallow it. Now he can verbalize the taste of the object. (expected answer sweet/sour).

**Learning - To identify by taste as opposed to thinking and identifying the object by memory. Mindful tasting. Did you know that the taste buds in the tongue can recognise the taste of sweet, sour, salty, bitter and spicy?**

### **3. Mindful Walking**

If weather is good walking can be done outside. Stand still at the beginning of the Walking Path. Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Release your breath slowly. Repeat. Open eyes, place hands together in front or behind. Walk Slowly, Mindfully and Silently with your mind focused on the sole of your feet. Be aware of the feeling or sensation on sole of feet as and when it touches the ground. Turn at the end of the path and walk back. Share your feelings.

### **4. Story - The Boys and their Loyal Dog**

A long, long time ago there was a farmer, his wife and two sons who lived in a small farm house by the side of a mango orchard and a small creek. The farmer and his wife worked very hard to cultivate, pick and protect their mango trees. The sons who were ten and six years old, helped their parents after school and on holidays. They earned their living by selling mangos and other tropical fruits at the market.

One day when the boys were playing near the orchard, they heard a noise coming from the bushes. It sounded like a weak whining. They went towards the bushes and saw a puppy who seemed to be very weak. The boys decided to take him home and give it some milk and food. Lifting it carefully, the older boy, Kalin, cradled the puppy and walked home slowly, mindfully, and silently with kindness (SMSK). The puppy cuddled close to Kalin's body. The boys named the puppy Rover after the Mars Rover.

Their mother showed them how to feed and look after Rover. She took a lid of a large cardboard box and an old blanket and asked her younger son, Kaveen, to put it on the lid. Rover had a comfortable place to sleep in the warm kitchen. Then she filled a baby milk bottle with some warm milk and showed Kalin how to feed the puppy who was very hungry.

The boys took good care of Rover. They gave him some soft mushy food that their mother had made and cookies dipped in milk as a treat. Rover was a happy, playful dog and followed the children wherever they went. He also followed them when they played in the mango orchard and the creek behind their property.



One bright sunny day the boys decided to explore the creek to find its beginning. Their mother gave them permission to go but reminded them that they were not to get into the water, or go near the edge of the creek and peer down as they may fall into the water. Their mother packed them a picnic lunch and asked them to come back shortly after lunch. She told them about a small waterfall about half-an-hour from their orchard where they could stop for lunch.

As instructed, they walked upstream and kept close to a foot path near the creek. At times it was bushy and the creek moved away from their reach. But they circled around the bushes as the sound of the creek was getting louder. They turned the corner to see a clearing and a small waterfall. Sitting by the creek the boys enjoyed their picnic lunch and started the walk back. It was on the way back that the boys got careless. They began to race back down the hill. Kalin asked Kaveen to slow down but he could not. Kaveen slipped, fell, and twisted his ankle.

It was clear that Kaveen was in pain and could not walk. Kalin crouched down and asked Kaveen to get on his back and started to walk back home.



But Kaveen was heavy and the path downhill was risky as there was loose gravel on the path. Kalin sat down on a boulder to rest and catch his breath. Kaveen got down carefully and sat down next to him. Rover knew that something was wrong. He licked Kalin and Kaveen and comforted them. Then he ran down the hill to the farm house to get help.

The boys saw the puppy run down the hill towards the orchard and the farm. They saw him reach the farm and heard his distant bark. It was not long before the boys saw their mother and father walk briskly up the hill with a first aid box and a coiled rope. They hugged the boys and were happy that they were safe. They checked Kaveen's ankle and said that it was only a sprain and he would be walking in a few days.

Everybody praised Rover and hugged him for his quick thinking. Rover was a loyal and wonderful friend for their boys. Their father carried Kaveen and they walked back home happy that they had helped the little puppy when he was weak and in need of help.

**Learning - Use every opportunity to be caring and kind to those in need.**

When you are kind and caring to a person or an animal, they are usually kind, and caring back to you.

Q 1 Share two acts of caring and kindness by the boys?

Q 2 Did the boys follow their mother's instructions?

Q 3 How did Rover show his gratitude to the family?

## 5. Mindful Breathing

- Use breath to anchor and stabilize the monkey mind that moves from one object to another like a boat in the rough sea.
- Gently close your eyes. Do you know that you are sitting? "Yes". "Good". We begin by relaxing the body, using a body scan to move from the thinking mind to feeling mind.
- Observe feeling anywhere in the body. Then, slowly focus your attention on the feeling of breath going in and out of the area around the nose, upper lip or in the area of the stomach.
- Anchor the wandering monkey mind to sensation where breath touches the body.
- If the mind wanders from the body, to the Past or the Future, bring it gently back to the sensation of the breath.
- Be happy, knowing that your mind has wandered off means that you are being mindful.

## 6. Home Work - Day 8

Five minutes of Mindful Walking followed by Mindful Sitting 2-3 times a week. Use Video of Mindful Pirate as required. (ten minutes)

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=N4sKY8smCho&feature=shared>

## Winter Break

## Reflections for Child

Listening to the teachings of the Buddha and Practicing mindfulness are very rare opportunities. I am grateful to my teachers and parents for teaching me. (Day 1)

Mindfulness leads to calm & wisdom. A full mind leads to anxiety and stress (Day 2)

You cannot be happy if you are unkind and hurtful to others. (Day 2 and 3)

A peaceful mind is a happy mind & A happy mind is a peaceful mind. (Day 2 and 5)

**There will always be ups and downs in life.** (Year, one, all terms)

### **Situations that are fun (ups):**

**Spring:** Cherry blossoms with fragrant pink flowers and baby lambs and calves playing in the fields. Building a tree house with family and friends.

**Summer:** Sitting around the camp fire toasting marshmallows and sand castles on the beach. Dark summer nights with a sky full of stars or Northern Lights.

**Autumn:** Walking in the forest with maple trees of red, orange and gold and squirrels hiding nuts for winter.

**Winter:** The first fall of snow sparkling like gems in the sun and making a snowman with friends.

### **Situations that are stressful (downs):**

**Spring:** Rain and snow melt that destroys crops.

**Summer:** Little brother stepping on the model train and breaking it on the very first day. Forest fires that spread to cities, and people losing their homes.

**Autumn:** Floods with mud slides, and sand bagging to save homes.

**Winter:** Flu season and staying at home from school because you are sick. Strong winds and ice storms that bring down trees.

The Mindful Turtle's Happy Place is hiding in his shell and observing his breath quietly until it is calm. The tiny bird's happy place is under the mud in the ploughed field. What is your Happy Place? (Day 3 and 5).

We cannot change what has happened. But we can always make it better, by not feeding angry thoughts, yelling or complaining and making it worse. (Day 4).

## Reflections for Child Cont.

The Mindful Pirate uses his spy glass to direct his attention. We use the spy glass of the mind to direct our attention to the breath and the sole of our feet. (Day 4)

I feel calm and happy when I watch the soil settle down in the magic jar.

I feel happy and good about myself when I help my mommy and daddy around the house and garden. (Day 5)

The mindful turtle, and the tiny bird both have a safe place that they use to calm their mind when they are agitated, afraid or sad. If you practice mindfulness daily, you can reduce and prevent feelings that result in stress and anxiety. Share your method of calming the mind. (Day 5)

**Mindfulness** is about knowing how to change one's ways when things go wrong. It's about slowing down and knowing your body, feelings and thoughts so that you can bring it back to calm. Mindfulness helps you to know the feeling in your body/mind.

**Mindfulness** prevents the mind from increasing anxiety and stressful feelings like sadness, fear, anger and frustration.

**Mindful Meditation** is knowing the mind, molding/shaping the mind and reducing feelings like anger and sadness.

We collected good used closed and school supplies for children who lost their belongings in the floods in Sri Lanka. The anxiety and sadness I felt when I heard about the flood and mud slides, changed to a good feeling. I felt happy when I helped my mother to pack the used clothes and supplies.

**Answer Yes or No.**

I use our magic jar when I feel anger or anxiety. Yes? No?

My mind calms down when I am quiet, and I observe the soil and mud settle down at the bottom. Yes? No?

I make better decisions when my mind is quiet and calm. Yes? No?

## Reflections for Parents

Mindfulness is bringing your attention to the present moment (using breath, walking meditation and daily activities) and observing your sensations, feelings and thoughts silently with kindness (non judgemental bare attention).

Mindfulness Meditation is knowing your mind, molding/shaping your mind and releasing/freeing your mind. Therefore, we begin by getting to know our minds through mindfulness.

When one just observes the mind and body with no reaction and judgement. it leads to calm, happiness and peace of mind.

Mindfulness requires daily consistent practice and patience. It also requires moving from the thinking mind to the feeling mind.

Mindfulness meditation requires a foundation of generosity, kindness to all beings (morality) and gratitude.

The child will progress well and with less effort if the family practices mindfulness together.

Slowly, one realizes that everything changes (impermanence). Some changes just take longer and cannot be seen by the human eye.

One becomes more accepting of change, kinder and a happier person.

One realizes that all beings are suffering and looking for happiness. We are all in the same boat, despite outward differences of colour, nationality, gender etc.

Your happy place is within you. Not outside. Sensual pleasures and gratification are also impermanent and lead to stress.

The answer lies in the middle path. Wisdom and compassion need to be balanced. You do not want to be a kind-hearted fool. Neither should you want to be a hard hearted intellect. Being kind and giving, does not mean one should let others take advantage of your goodness. That is foolish compassion.

Book knowledge is necessary for knowing how to practice. But it does not lead to freedom. The Path, The Freedom, lies in your spiritual practice.

## Reflections for Parents Cont.

A Dhamma friend is required for the success of the spiritual practice. Such a person is a rare gem in the West and you are fortunate if you have one. He/she needs to be a spiritual practitioner that you respect, trust and you can relate to. They must also must be non-judgemental and kind.

You should be able to tell them your deepest fears, uncertainties and vulnerabilities. Your Dhamma friend should be kind, understanding and non judgemental. This is how the ego is conquered/overcome. Through wisdom, loving kindness, compassion, gratitude and a good Dhamma Friend. It is best if your Dhamma friend is of the same gender as it is easier for them to relate to and understand your challenges.

When you transgress reflect on whom you are protecting? yourself or your loved ones? The ego is tricky and a good actor. It masquerades as compassion. You have to fulfil your duties and care for your loved ones when they are in need. But you can not save them or change the world. You, are your own saviour. And your loved ones will be their own saviors.

We need:

The serenity to accept that which we cannot change

The courage to change that which we can, and

The wisdom to know which is which.

Mindfulness will give you these requirements.