

Lesson 4

The Power Up Board and Building a Feelings Vocabulary



In this lesson, students will be introduced to the Power Up board and the various skills, represented by the board icons, that they are going to learn throughout the year. This board will be used to track their progress in using the learned skills. This lesson also introduces students to the home icon on their controller. This will also be referred to as the home mode. The home mode represents our resting state. This is the state we enter into when starting a game. We have good health and energy levels, and no boosters or ways to boost our energy or abilities. In the home mode we have positive feelings and feel good about taking on the challenges that might be presented to us, resulting in us being productive. Last, in home mode students are in control of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Feelings in the home mode include happy, confident, calm, grateful, peaceful, proud, relaxed, content, loved, pleased, cheerful, and joyful.

Introduction

The Power Up board and icons serve as visual reminders for students of the skills they are learning. Images and symbols are all around us in billboards, videos, phones, and video games. Since visuals are such a large part of our culture, it is helpful to incorporate what students know and are familiar with as a means to reinforce learning. Visuals in the classroom give students the chance to experience information in a form other than auditory, while also aiding with the processing of more abstract thought processes (Pezzino, 2018).

Feelings Vocabulary

The majority of communication is through nonverbal cues (e.g. eye contact, facial expressions, gestures). When working with students, it is important to support them in their being able to express themselves both verbally and nonverbally. Many times, we can see students expressing their emotions with undesired behaviors. By increasing students' vocabulary for feelings, we are giving them the building blocks to express their wants and needs through verbal means.

Affect labeling is naming the emotion you are feeling at the time. Lieberman et al. (2011) found that distress decreases with affect labeling. Fan et

al. (2018) found that while negative emotions are not felt for a longer period of time than positive emotions, negative emotions do decrease in intensity more quickly after they have been expressed. Payer et al. (2012) found that affect labeling was associated with increasing activity in the prefrontal cortex, resulting in a decrease in activity in the amygdala. This indicates that when people are able to affect label, they are tapping into the part of their brain that helps them think critically and problem solve.

Objectives

Students will be able to

- identify the purpose of the Power Up board
- identify at least three feelings that represent being in home mode
- use at least three of their senses to describe home mode feelings

Success Criteria

Students are able to

- identify at least three feelings that represent the home mode
- understand what the home mode looks, sounds, and feels like
- feel comfortable talking to others about their home mode experiences

Materials

- Dry erase board or chalkboard
- One copy per student of the Power Up board
- One copy per student of the My Home Mode worksheet
- Preferred coloring utensils
- Scissors
- Photocopy or printout of the Feelings Words worksheet. Feelings words will be cut out from this worksheet for Session 3’s activity.
- Stapler (for Session 4’s optional activity)
- Three blank pieces of loose paper per student (for Session 4’s optional activity)

Things to Note

Prior to the lesson, teachers should review the components of the Power Up board and determine if they would like to offer rewards when students “power up.” Examples of rewards can be found in the section Rewards and Tallying of Power Up Bars in the introduction. There are also many ways to reward students with something they value but that represents no monetary expense.

Teachers should designate an accessible, visible place for each student’s Power Up board. The recommended place for the boards is on the students’

HANDOUT 4.2

Feeling Words

Home Mode Feeling Words		
happy	confident	calm
peaceful	proud	relaxed
grateful	content	joyful
loved	pleased	cheerful

Rewind Mode Feeling Words		
sad	worried	hopeless
tired	guilty	embarrassed
disappointed	lonely	discouraged
bored	depressed	exhausted

Fast-Forward Mode Feeling Words		
frustrated	angry	enraged
jealous	nervous	surprised
anxious	excited	exuberant

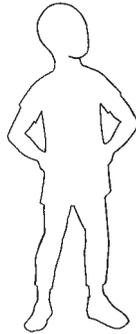
HANDOUT 4.3

My Home Mode

Looks like:

Sounds like:

Feels like:

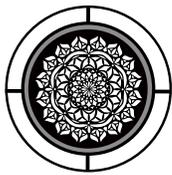


Lesson 10

Slowing Down Strategies



**Deep Breathing
Icon**



Mandala Icon



**Finger Maze
Icon**

This week students will start learning strategies on how to calm their bodies when they have increased energy. They will learn three strategies that will reduce their energy levels (deep breathing, mandalas, and finger mazes) so that they are able to pick the one that works best for them.

Introduction

There are many benefits to using strategies to reduce energy levels when dealing with difficult emotions. This lesson will present the benefits arising from the practices of using deep breathing, tracing finger mazes, and coloring mandalas.

Deep breathing. Deep breathing is a self-management strategy that helps the body better cope with stress. Deep breathing increases our oxygen levels and allows us to expel carbon dioxide from our body. When stressed, our sympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for the fight, flight, or freeze response (Patel, 2017), is activated. When this response is triggered, hormones are released that increase blood pressure and pulse rate. Deep breathing activates the parasympathetic nervous system, reversing these responses and slowing down our heart rate and lowering blood pressure (Patel, 2017). When we are able to counteract the effects of the fight, flight, or freeze response and lower our blood pressure and pulse rate, we are better able to relax our body, think through our situation, and respond in an appropriate manner.

Other health benefits of the practice of deep breathing include reducing anxiety and depression, increasing energy levels and muscle relaxation, and decreasing overall feelings of stress (Patel, 2017).

Mandalas. The word *mandala* means “sacred circle” in Sanskrit (Bi & Liu, 2019). Circles are considered powerful in many cultures and are found in nature (flowers, moon, sun, etc). Mandalas are considered symbols for many things, ranging from representations of wholeness to control in times of dysregulation (Palmer et al., 2014). Coloring can reduce stress and improve well-being (Rigby & Taubert, 2016), and coloring mandalas in specific can reduce anxiety (Van der Venet & Serice, 2012; Mantzios & Giannou, 2018).

In Van der Vennett and Serice's study, (2012) coloring a mandala was found to be more effective in reducing anxiety than free drawing.

Finger mazes. Finger mazes are a form a labyrinth. Made up of paths that lead from a starting point to and ending point, finger mazes can be simple or elaborate. Alego (2001) asserts that there are two different types of labyrinths: the maze (made up of paths that split off with one path to the end point) and the meander (a single path leading to the end point). Using finger mazes helps us shift our focus from a stressful situation to something that is nonthreatening and unrelated to the situation.

Objective

- Students will be able to identify three new calming strategies that they can utilize when they are in fast-forward mode.

Success Criteria

Students are able to

- identify at least three new calming self-management strategies
- understand when they should utilize deep breathing, mandalas, and finger mazes
- feel comfortable trying each strategy (mandalas, finger mazes, and deep breathing) to see which ones work for them

Materials

- Preferred coloring utensils
- One copy per student of the Mandala worksheet
- One copy per student of the My Mandala worksheet (or blank piece of paper)
- One copy per student of the Finger Mazes worksheet
- One copy per student of the Controller worksheet

Things to Note

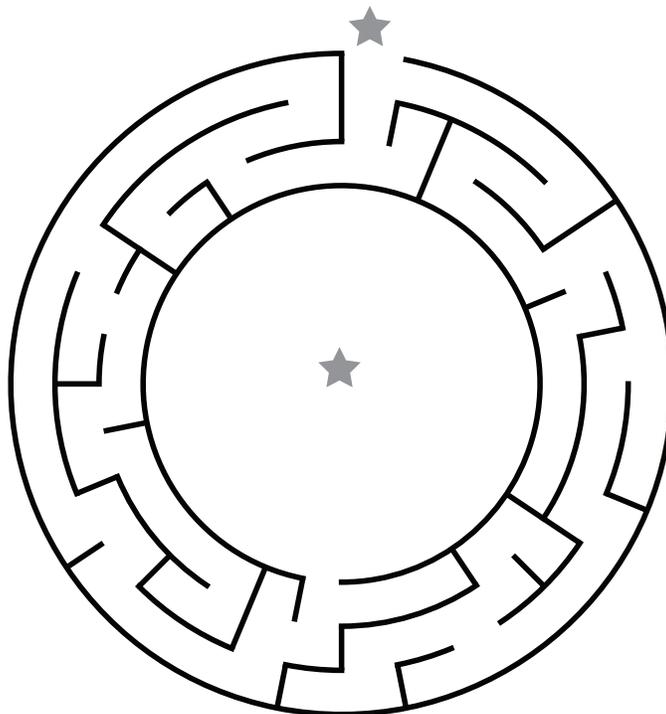
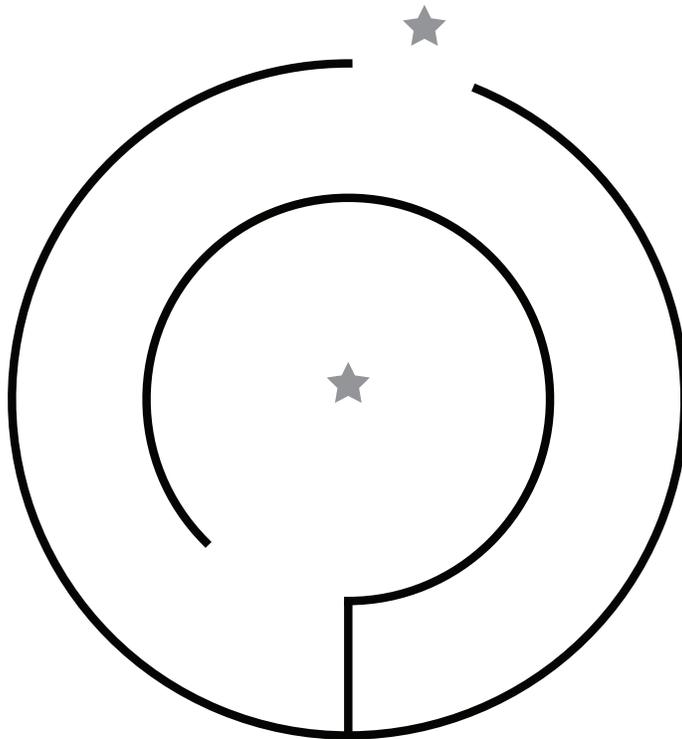
Avoid telling students which strategies work best for them. If you notice them trying a strategy and it isn't working, encourage them to try a different one.

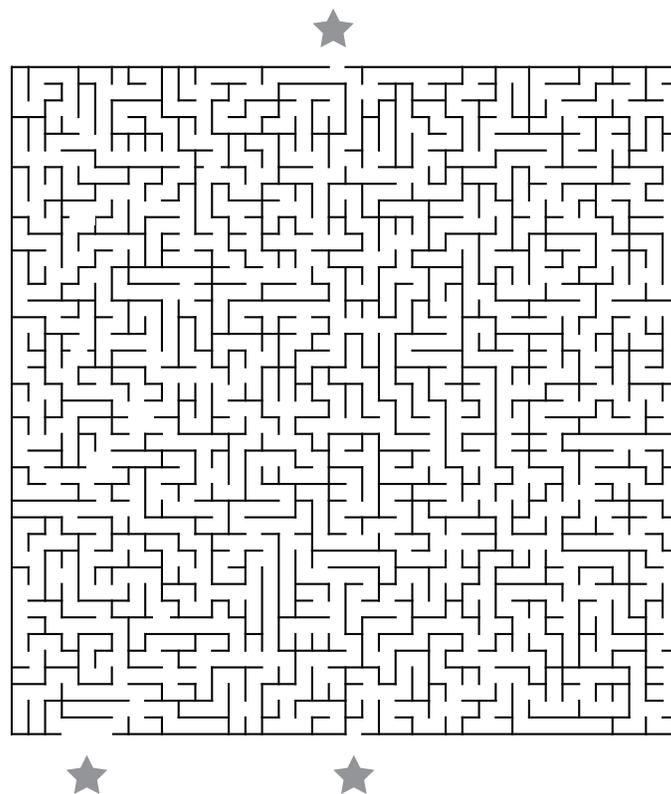
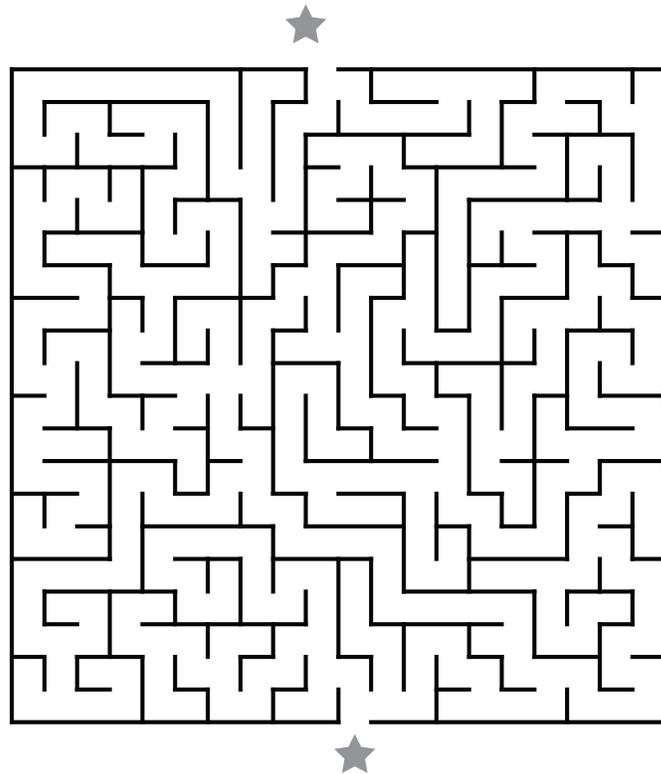
Session 10.1: Practicing Deep Breathing

Before beginning the new lesson, check in with students on how they did in using the strategy they learned in the previous lesson. Ask students who remembers what strategy they learned last week. After students respond, extend the discussion by asking if using the pause, think, play strategy helped them. How did they feel before using it? How did they feel after using it?

HANDOUT 10.4

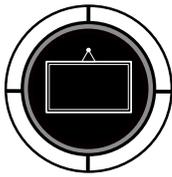
Finger Mazes



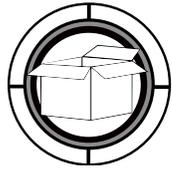


Lesson 12

Energizing Strategies



**Reframing
Icon**



**Worry Box
Icon**



**Wall Push-Ups
Icon**



**Stretching
Icon**

Students will learn four new self-management skills they can use to energize their bodies and minds. These skills are reframing, placing their worries in a worry box, performing wall push-ups, and stretching. Students can use these strategies when they find themselves in the rewind mode. These strategies can help combat anxiety and depression and help them experience a more elevated mood and move them back to the home mode.

Introduction

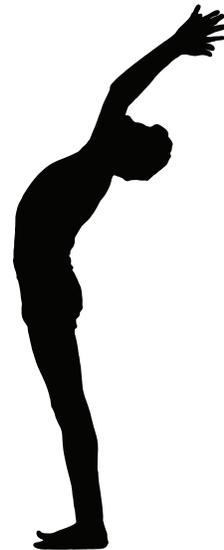
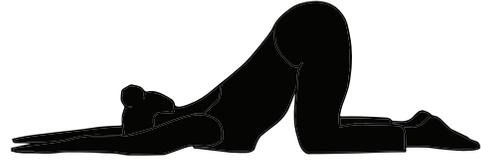
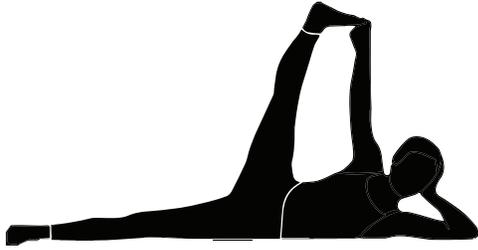
The four strategies in this lesson help students to shift their focus, change how they view situations, decrease anxiety and depression, and improve mental health.

Worry Box. It is important for students to be able to identify their worries so they can start to cope with them and/or resolve them. The purpose of the worry box intervention is to give students a container to “place” their worries in and to reduce stress. Students will write down their worries and leave them in the box. Getting the worries onto paper and “contained” helps them compartmentalize their feelings so they can temporarily shift their focus away from emotions that might become overwhelming. If their worries are in a box, then they aren’t in their head. Students can move back to the home mode where they don’t feel weighed down with feelings of sadness and anxiety.

Physical activity. Exercise poses physical, mental, and emotional health benefits. Exercise can help prevent and treat cardiovascular disease, improve cognitive functioning, and reduce the risk of stroke (Epstein, 2006; Brugniaux et al., 2014). Mental health is also positively affected by physical activity. Siqueira et al. (2016) found that exercise enabled individuals with major depressive disorder to take lower dosages of medication than those who did not exercise and achieve the same effect.

Stretching exercises can improve students’ mental health and help put them in a state where they are ready to learn. If students are receptive to learning, their productivity increases and they are in a better position to achieve their educational goals. Exercise is also free, easy to implement, and can be individualized. As students move and exercise, their mood will improve, moving them from the rewind mode to the home mode.

HANDOUT 12.4
Stretching



HANDOUT 12.5

Reframing

