

# Lesson Plan - February

## Showing kindness to yourself

- February is a month when we often encourage each other to be caring towards others.
- Let's not forget that we need to be kind to ourselves every day too!
- We will focus on 3 ways to show kindness to ourselves: Nutrition, Sleep & Mindfulness.

## Kindness through nutrition

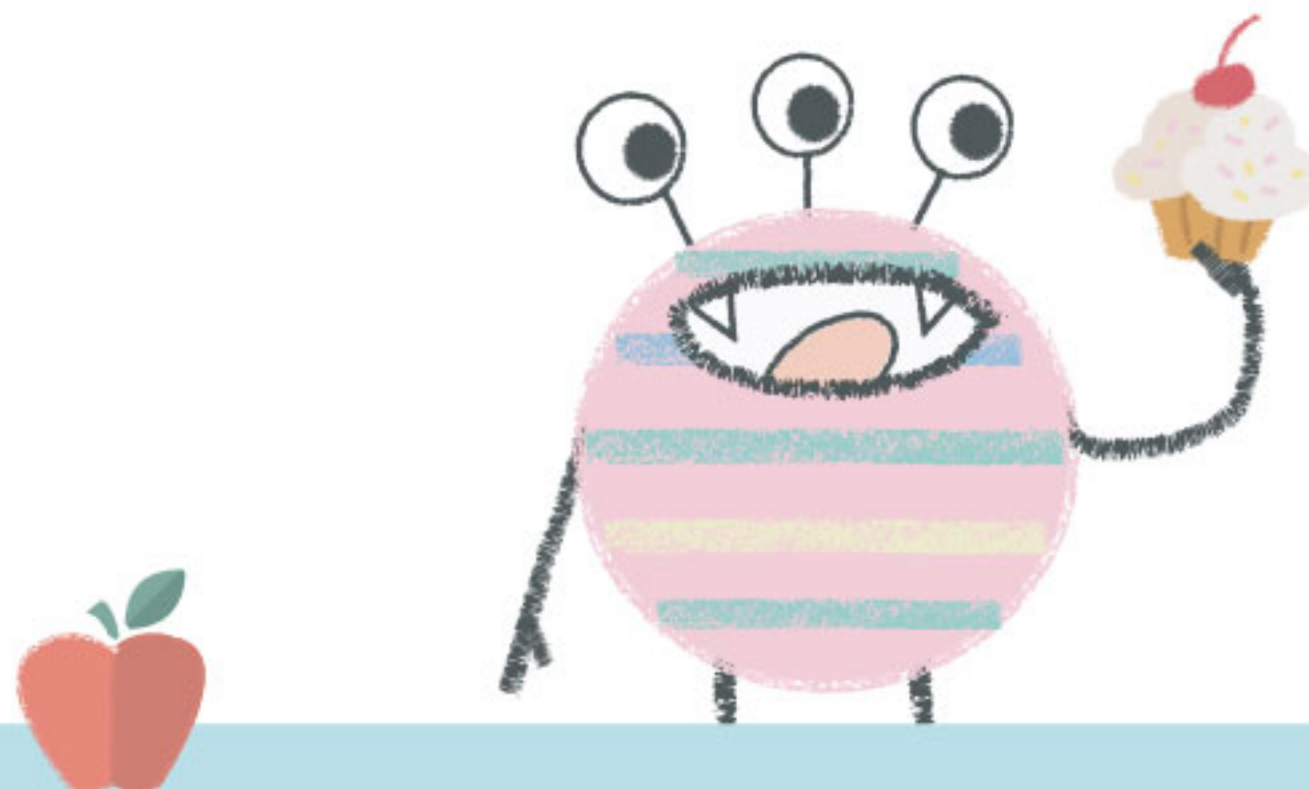
- Eating healthy is complicated, but simple changes can have big effects, like eating less sugar.
- We've become used to sugar being added to all kinds of foods, like bread, salad dressing, and even pasta sauces.
- Our body breaks down sugar into 2 main parts: glucose and fructose. Ever see "high fructose corn syrup" on the nutrition label of a food product? That's sugar!
- By simply eating less sugar, we are helping our liver fight the formation of dangerous cholesterol called "small dense LDL," which can increase our risk of heart disease.

## Kindness through sleep

- Sleep has always been a staple of a healthy life. We even feel better after a good night's rest.
  - A recent discovery has found that our brain gets washed during our sleep. While we sleep, our brain is cleaned with cerebrospinal fluid. This cleaning gets rid of harmful waste proteins that become toxic to our brain if left unwashed.
- Just like we take showers daily, we should remember that our brain needs a good cleaning every night as well.

## Kindness through mindfulness

- Mindfulness might sound new to you, but it is essentially "awareness."
- Taking time to become aware of our emotions, thoughts, and surroundings can improve our focus, mood, and even minimize stress.
- Practicing mindfulness is simple and easy; closing your eyes for 1 minute and focusing on your senses starts you on the path to a healthier mind.





# Activity 1 - Personal Weather Report

The goal of this activity is to have students identify their emotions as internal weather, and like weather our emotions are not something we can change but rather acknowledge and understand.

- Weather is ever changing and temporary like our emotions
- By acknowledging our emotions we can identify less with them and build resilience to them.
- Our emotions do not define us, but rather something that we feel at different moment throughout the day.
  - “I feel stormy but I am not a storm cloud”
  - “Sometimes I feel mad but I’m not a tornado”
- Have students sit and close their eyes
  - Tell them that this exercise requires 1 minute of quiet to work
  - Have students take 3 deep breaths
- While they are sitting still ask students to tune into their “personal weather report” by identifying a weather event that best matches their feelings right now.
  - Are they feeling sunny? Is it raining and overcast? Maybe a little stormy with thunder?
- Have students sit for 2 to 3 more minutes quietly with eyes closed
  - Did their weather report change? If so to what?
  - How did they react to their weather?
  - Ask students what weather and our emotions have in common.
  - Is it always sunny?
  - Does it sometimes suddenly get stormy?
  - Did their weather change drastically or maybe just a little?
  - Can we control the weather?
  - What do we do when it’s raining? What about when it’s sunny and hot?
- End the lesson by explaining that emotions are a lot like weather, we cannot change them but rather accept them. By accepting them we can learn to overcome them, like bringing an umbrella on a rainy day or sunscreen on a sunny day.

Optional: If there is extra time, have students draw out all the different weather events they felt during the activity.





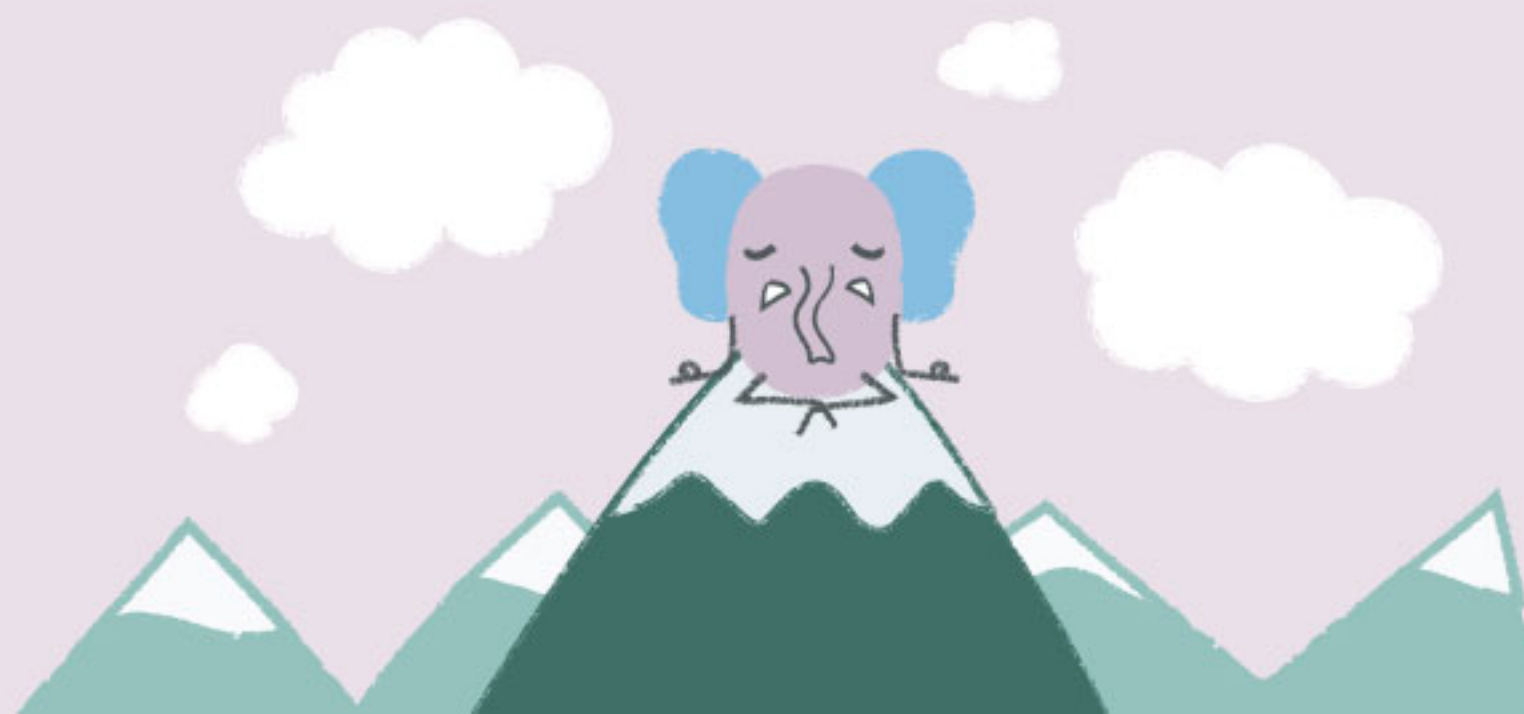
# Activity 2 - Super Spidey Senses

The goal of this activity is to have students practice mindfulness and focus by tuning into their senses.

- Mindfulness is just focused awareness
- By focusing on our senses we can tune into our super powers like Spider man

Materials: Bell & fragrant flower or citrus peel for each student

- Start the lesson with students sitting down, eyes closed with hands on their knees.
  - Tell students that they are going to learn how to activate their super sense just like super heroes.
  - First, they are going to learn how to activate their super hearing by having them listen to a bell.
  - Ring the bell once, when they no longer can hear the bell they should put their hands together quietly
  - Do this three times, after the third time their super hearing is activated. Awesome!
- Give each student a piece of citrus peel or flower petal.
- Second task is to activate their sense of touch.
  - Have them pay attention to the texture, what does it feel like under their fingers. Soft, fuzzy, bumpy?
- Next have them activate their super sense of smell
  - Tell students to smell the item, what do they smell?
  - Is it a strong smell? Maybe it has only a little smell.
- Lastly, they can now activate their sense of sight by opening their eyes.
  - Have students look closely at their item.
  - Pay attention to details, what shapes and textures does the item have.
- Congratulate the class on activating all their super spidey sense!
  - How do they feel? Do they feel more relaxed? Focused?
- By paying close attention to small details we are able to calm our mind of distracting thoughts and improve our focus.







**Dignity Health**<sup>TM</sup>

Brittany is practicing mindfulness.  
Draw her thoughts and surroundings.

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