

Mindfulness

is simply the process in which you focus on the present moment and clear your mind of problems and worries. Mindfulness techniques are known to help with one's well-being and to improve health in ways such as reducing stress and helping to improve sleep. It has been shown that "losing yourself" in some activity, such as being absorbed in a puzzle, colouring page or similar, can be a great way to help you relax and focus "on the moment". We know from experiencing the last lockdown that children aren't always that keen on "learning" from home and get distracted, so taking regular breaks, getting fresh air in their lungs or swapping to a mindful activity for a bit, can help you and them concentrate better.

Here's a few things to try for this week:

- ☺ 10 minutes mindful colouring (books available in most supermarkets etc and online links are good if you can print out)
- ☺ Short brain exercises, for example countdown numbers game, conundrums or word puzzles are good for KS2. There are always links online, make sure you add "primary" or KS1/KS2 to your search. Here's one for now- 100, 25, 4, 2, 10, 3 Target 777 Use the 6 given numbers and any operation(+,-,x,divide) to try to make the target number.
- ☺ Dot to dot books, spot the differences, mazes
- ☺ Mindful breathing(see below)
- ☺ Yoga



Teddy Breathing(speak slowly and calmly as you give the instructions)

Lie on the floor and place a small teddy/toy on your stomach. Breathe in deeply through your nose and feel the teddy/toy rise, and then feel it lower as you slowly exhale(let your breath out) out through your mouth.

Try to rock the teddy/toy to sleep using the rise and fall of your stomach.

Keep this going for a couple of minutes, quietly saying breathe in....breathe out... every now and again. How does your body feel now?

Once they have done this with you, they should be able to do it alone next time. Actually though, this is a nice time for you as a parent to just watch your child at peace, something that doesn't happen much in our ever busy lives.



This is a link to a lovely page for children especially KS1

<https://www.sesamestreet.org/caring>

Word Blast:

Send your child outside for 2 minutes, with the instruction to be as mindful as they can, use all their senses to take in what is around them. When they come back in give them 2-3 minutes to list everything they could see and hear (you might want to choose smell and feel, or any other combination) try to stick to 2 senses as this makes them think more.





Healthy body, healthy mind:

The benefits of exercise:

- Exercise helps our brain to release serotonin, a chemical that helps to regulate our mental health
- Physical activity stimulates the neurotransmitter norepinephrine, which improves our mood
- Young people who participate in team sports learn social skills and gain confidence
- Children who develop physical abilities and learn new skills feel more positive about their bodies
- When engaged in a physical activity your child will be distracted from stressful and negative thoughts

It can be hard to find ways of increasing our activity levels and easy to come up with excuses but a few small changes to your routine could have big benefits. When everything starts going back to normal, how about walking the kids to school once a week or keeping up a regular family bike ride. Gardening, doing chores, it's all exercise. Remember your child doesn't have to enjoy sport to be physically active. Add little short bursts throughout their day. Try this:

On the spot (3 minutes)

For the 1 st minute jog on the spot, ask them to really concentrate on staying on that spot. If they are finding it difficult, give them something specific to jog on, a chalk mark a pattern, on the carpet.	
In the 2 nd minute (no stopping) change to high knee running on the spot. Again remind them to concentrate on each knee and how high they can get it.	
For the 3 rd minute, go back to jogging on the spot. Concentrate hard on staying on the spot. At the end talk to them about how they feel? Was it hard to stay on the spot? Do they think it will be easier next time?	