

**Use these fun and simple activities to allow children to slow down and take a moment. It's fun to do them with the whole family if you can!!**

### **Mind & Body**

This exercise is good to get children to be in the moment and to only think about one thing. It is a good exercise to help clear their mind and focus on themselves.

Stand in your own space and place your feet firmly on the floor. Let your toes spread on to the floor, can you wriggle them? Can you lift just your toes off the floor? Rise on to the balls of your feet, now try standing on your heels. Sit down and shake one foot then the other, make circles with your feet –one way and the other. Stretch your toes away from you and now pull them up towards you. Become aware of your own body and how it is pulled down to the floor.

### **Guess my Emotion**

This exercise helps children understand how to read and show emotions through facial expressions and body language. Unpack how we don't always say explicitly how we are feeling but may show it in other ways.

What are emotions? Have a little conversation about what emotions you feel and how we can feel different emotions on the inside than we may feel on the outside. Talk about feelings and how we feel different emotions each day.

Together you share the beginning of your day from getting up to whatever time of day it is now, however you can use no words to express your emotion but only show it in their facial expressions. The other person must guess how they were feeling and if their emotions changed throughout their morning routine.

### **Moving like an emotion**

Often the way we move really conveys how we are feeling by our pace and body language. Choose different emotions and ask everyone to move around with that specific emotion. You could then ask one person to move with the opposite emotion to everyone else. Repeat this a few times with different emotions and opposite emotions. Unpack how it felt to be the only person feeling the opposite emotion.

### **Slow Down**

When we slow down we centre ourselves and it gives us time to think about how we really are. Bubbles move slowly and help us to move slowly too in all the rushing of life.

Talk about bubbles- what do they move like/ look like. Blow some bubbles. The children can follow them gently with their eyes. Put some slow calm music on. You could then become a human bubble. As the

music plays move around the room slowly floating like a bubble. This will create a slow and calm atmosphere.

## Time to Listen

1) Explain to your children that you are all going to try and just think about what is happening now. Not what they've done, not what they are going to do next. When we do this we can be calmer, more relaxed and happier. Listening is a very special activity that helps us to do this.

2) Ask everyone to sit in a comfortable posture in a chairs (if possible) and for one minute to listen to the different sounds around them. Sitting quietly without talking. Ask everyone to gently close their eyes while they do this practice, so they can listen without distraction. (Let them know that after this one minute they are going to write down, or talk about all the different sounds that they heard)

3) After one minute ask your everyone to stop listening, take a few breaths, and to write down all the different sounds they heard. They have one more minute to do this practice. (*You may choose to skip this step*)

4) After one minute ask everyone to stop writing. Ask them to let you know what sounds they could hear. What sounds are written on their list? Ask them to do this one at a time, without interrupting, its ok if some says the same as you.

As you are discussing this you could possible link some of the sounds to the following and thank God for them:

- Birds, wind etc – thank God for his creation and how we can enjoy it
- Sounds in the house – thank God for amazing inventions that have been created, and inventions that are still being created
- Voices/People – thank God for friends and family

5) Discussion: What did everyone notice during the practice of listening? Anything different?

6) Did they enjoy listening quietly? Was it relaxing for them?

7) Do they think they could practice this at home or when they are outside? 8) Why do they think that listening is important in their life? What would happen if we don't listen? When we are listening to someone can we be doing other things at the same time? How does this effect what we hear?

9) Ask them if they think they would they be able to sit for two minutes listening...to see if they could hear even more sounds?

10) Ask the class if they would like to do the practice again, to see if they can hear any new sounds that didn't hear first time around or if they would like to try again next week perhaps in a different location. Don't push this you maybe can revisit this at a later date

For more information around children's mental health contact  
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