

**BRAIN / BODY THURSDAY - FLIP YOUR LID & FEEL, CONNECT, ACT TO HEAL****Welcome students to Mindful ME.**

Encourage them to find their Mindful Body posture so that they are ready to listen and learn.

This week, cross your hands over your heart in a gesture of loving-kindness. Encourage students to cross their hands when they are ready to listen.

[Play the Feel, Connect, Act to Heal: Flipping Your Lid video or read the discussion below]

Today we're going to talk about our brain and our nervous system. The more we understand how our brain works and how our body works, the stronger we are, and the better able we are to feel, connect, and act to heal. Today we're going to talk about something called flipping your lid.

Hold up your hand and wave 'hi' [raise your hand and wave].

Now take your thumb and put it inside your hand and take your 4 fingers and put them on top of your thumb [fold your thumb in then fold your four fingers over your thumb].

Your thumb should be tucked nicely inside with your fingers on top.

[Point to your hand] Imagine that this is your brain. Today we're going to talk about what happens when you flip your lid.

What do I mean by flipping your lid? That's a funny thing to say. It means you get out of control, maybe you're so frustrated or overwhelmed about something that you feel like you just lose it. You don't have control over your body, your words, or your actions anymore. Has that ever happened to you?

It happens to me, too.

We can do is learn about why this happens in our brains so that we can use our tools to avoid it from happening in the future. I know when that when I flip my lid, I don't feel my best, and I'm not able to do the things I want to do. I'm not able to solve problems anymore, and I'm not able to connect with other people anymore. I want to be able to put that lid back on.

So let's find out what happens in our brain. When you flip your lid, it's like these fingers right here stand up [raise your fingers off your thumb].

Let's do that together- 1, 2, 3 [lift your fingers again].

Let's imagine that these fingers are the part of your brain called the prefrontal cortex. It's right here [point to your forehead]. This part of your brain is largely responsible for making decisions, solving problems, and talking to other people. When your lid flips, that part of your brain isn't available to you anymore, and it becomes challenging to do things like make decisions and solve problems.

Let's see what's under your lid. [Point to your thumb]

This is a part of your brain called the amygdala. It is responsible for your feelings and emotions and for taking care of you when you're in danger. Sometimes, when you get over-activated and feel super angry, overwhelmed, or very frustrated, this part of the brain takes over. When this part of the brain is overactive, we lose control of all of these other things [point to the four fingers representing the prefrontal cortex].

You can put your hand down now.

What can we do to connect these parts of the brain back together and put our lids back on?

We can use the tools we're learning. When you feel like you're about to flip your lid, you can pause and think, "I feel like I'm about to flip my lid. I need to do something to help myself right now."

We can choose one of the tools we've learned to put our lids back on. Maybe you decide to do some belly breaths or Flower Power Breath, maybe you choose to do some strong movement in your body, or maybe you choose to sit quietly or take some time to yourself.

Maybe you choose to ask for help. You might say to a friend or a trusted adult, "I flipped my lid. I don't feel in control. Could you stand or sit with me until I feel better? I need some help."

That's all you need to say.

Sometimes, the only words you have available to you are, "I need some help."

That's a really useful tool to use. You can use your breath, your movement, quiet time, or you can ask for help. These are some really important tools you can use to put your lid back on.

There's one other really important thing to remember. Each day that we practice these tools-- we practice meditation, practice moving our bodies with our breath, practice our breathing tools-- the less likely it will be that your lid comes totally off.

It's ok if it happens, of course, but the more you practice, the more likely it will be that it comes off only a little bit. Or maybe it stays on, and you're able to say, "I feel like I'm getting overwhelmed and frustrated. I'm going to pause now and use one of my tools."

You're able to stop it from happening before it gets out of control. Isn't that amazing? You can cultivate some control over how often you flip your lid.

Discussion

Ask students to name some of the tools they can use when they feel like they're about to flip their lids.

Then ask, "How does practicing these tools help you over time?"

If time allows, have students draw or write the tools they can use on their sheets of paper. You can add these to in-classroom Peace Places, or they can add them to at-home Peace Places.