

**BRAIN / BODY THURSDAY - BRAIN BUILDER: FIGHT/FLIGHT/FREEZE****Welcome students to Mindful ME.****Fight/Flight/Freeze Brain Builder**

Welcome students to Mindful ME. Encourage them to find their Mindful Body posture so that they are ready to listen and learn. Use finger-touching from Monday to help students center their attention.

Play Danger Response Video Below or Discuss the Danger Response using the text here:

Danger Response (Fight/Flight/Freeze)

“When you are in danger, your body has useful ways of protecting you. Without even thinking about it, you might feel ready to fight back (Fight), run away (Flight), or get very still (Freeze). Each of these responses is a way to keep you safe from danger. Imagine a tiger is close by, what might happen inside your body? What would your body do?” (get ready to run, tense up, faster heart rate, faster breathing, etc.)

“Your sympathetic nervous system (SNS) is responsible for the Fight/Flight/Freeze response. When you sense danger, your heart rate might speed up, your breathing speed might increase, your muscles might get tense, and you might feel a flood of energy flow through your body. All of these reactions prepare your body to do what it needs to do if it is threatened.”

“Sometimes, our bodies have a danger response to things that are challenging but that may not threaten our lives. For some people, a test, an audition, meeting someone new, hearing a loud noise, or having an argument can cause the body to have a danger response. When that happens, we can work with our FEEL, CONNECT, ACT TO HEAL sequence.”

Let’s try an experiment together:

- Find a comfortable place to sit, stand, or lie down.
- Let’s pretend that you are facing a stressful situation. It might be a test, an argument with a family member or friend, or ...
- Imagine what that stress would feel like in your body. What would your body want to do? Would you scrunch up your face? Tense your shoulders? Clench your fists? What else?
- Notice what it’s like to breathe when your body is in an imaginary danger response. Does your breath feel full and deep or short and shallow? Where in your body do you notice your breath?

- Now begin to take deeper breaths, imagining the breath filling up your belly as you breathe in. As you breathe out, let all of the air out while saying, “haaaaaa” -- just like we do when we take Flower Power breaths.
- Continue doing deep Flower Power breaths for about one minute.
- Return to a normal breathing pattern for you. Notice how your body feels after taking deep breaths.
- What is your heart rate like? Does your body feel the same as it did when you were imagining the danger response? Do you feel excited, calm, or neutral? Where do you notice tension or tightness right now?

“What we did with our breath just now was FEEL, CONNECT, and ACT TO HEAL. We felt what was happening in our bodies when we imagined a danger. We connected to a tool we know, ‘I can try Flower Power breath to see if it helps me shift my body away from the danger response. And then we acted by doing Flower Power breath and then checking in with ourselves after breathing for about one minute.”

“As we learn more tools for our Mindful ME toolbox, we’ll be able to choose the tools that best fit a situation.”

Remind students that they will share their Mindful ME Objects tomorrow during Mindful ME. (Either with a drawing, in discussion, or as a Show and Tell, depending on what is best for your classroom)

Virtual Learning: Ask students to draw a tense face next to a relaxed face. They can add this drawing to their Peace Place at home to remind them that they have tools they can use to shift how their feeling. They can add more emotions and faces to this page as they learn more tools.

Send home the Fight/Flight/Freeze Sheet for continued practice at home.