



L1. COPING SKILLS

Y5



LAUGHOLOGY
HAPPY-CENTRED
SCHOOL PROGRAMME

LAUGHOLOGY

LESSON 1 QUESTION: What does it mean to cope?



YOU WILL NEED:

Packs of cards; Blank Face Template.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- Write 'coping skills' on the board and ask the class what they think it means. Share some of the answers.
- In pairs, ask children to share any coping skills that they already use. Feed some answers back to the rest of the class.
- Ask the children why they might need coping skills for a challenge. Encourage answers such as: to help complete the challenge, because the challenge might be difficult so to get through it we need coping skills.
- Explain to the children that their challenge is to make a house of cards, which needs to be 30 cm high and stand alone for 5 seconds. They have just two minutes to complete the exercise and will be working in small groups.
- Ask the children to think about how they might cope if the house falls down or if they don't complete the challenge. Ask children for examples of what supportive parents, teachers and people might say to help them cope. Encourage the children to say these things to each other and to themselves.
- Set a timer and start the challenge.
- As they are building the house, walk past and accidentally knock the table, knocking down their houses.
- When the two minutes are up, ask the children how they felt when doing the challenge.
- How did they cope when the card house was knocked over or when it fell down? Ask if they think their houses were deliberately knocked down and why that happened? What lessons can be learnt by doing this?
- Ask them whether they feel they will still be upset about not completing the challenge in one week's time, or even one month's time. Ask the children to explain why it will not matter.
- Give the children a blank face and ask them to draw how they felt when they were doing the task. Around the face, they should write words to describe their feelings and then their top three coping skills.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- Ask the children what they learnt about coping with challenges. How might this impact on how they do the task next time?
- Discuss situations when the children might need coping skills, e.g. starting a new school, moving home, loss of a pet, when a friend refuses to play, when doing assessments etc.
- Give out award leaves for children who are able to understand what it means to cope.

TEACHER NOTES:



→ POSSIBLE RELATED VOCABULARY TO TEACH:

Coping, Strengths, Success, Co-operation, Friendships, Aid, Guide, Listen, Model, Together, Teamwork, Community, Compassion, Reassurance, Giving, Comfort, Thoughtfulness, Grit, Determination, Can-do, Attitude, Together, Standing tall, Breathing, Relaxation

→ DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

Some children may find it more challenging to cope with their house of cards being knocked over. They may benefit from having a personal target, related to the lesson, set at the beginning.

→ TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

→ WHAT WENT WELL?

→ WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

→ OTHER IDEAS:



L2. COPING SKILLS

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LESSON 2 QUESTION:

How can I use mindfulness techniques to help me cope?



YOU WILL NEED:

Mindfulness Script that was used with the children in Year 4;
paper and pens.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- › Remind the children of the mindfulness script that they listened to and relaxed to when they were in Year 4.
- › Remind them that mindfulness is a mental state, achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, whilst calmly acknowledging and accepting feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations.
- › Ask if any of the children have used mindfulness techniques recently to help them cope with difficult situations. If so, they may or may not want to share further information.
- › Explain that, in this session, the children are going to work in groups to write their own script. Their aim is to keep the listener focused on the present moment, and not to let their thoughts wander to things in the past or the future.
- › In groups, the children should write their script.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- › In turns, the children should read their scripts to the other groups, encouraging them to carry out the instructions, e.g. lying on the floor and relaxing their arms.
- › Ask the other groups to provide feedback to the script writers, regarding what they enjoyed and what could be improved. Improvements could be linked to instructions such as, 'Imagine that you are at the beach' is not about being in the present.
- › Children should be reminded that mindfulness is about the here and now, although relaxing and imagining that you are in a calming place is another useful technique when you are feeling angry.

TEACHER NOTES:



→ POSSIBLE RELATED VOCABULARY TO TEACH:

Coping, Strengths, Success, Co-operation, Friendships, Aid, Guide, Listen, Model, Together, Teamwork, Community, Compassion, Reassurance, Giving, Comfort, Thoughtfulness, Grit, Determination, Can-do, Attitude, Together, Standing tall, Breathing, Relaxation

→ DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

Some children could be extended to write a script which focuses on using mindfulness when people are eating food or carrying out other activities.

Some children might benefit from being encouraged to carry out each action prior to writing the next sentence on their script.

→ TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

→ WHAT WENT WELL?

→ WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

→ OTHER IDEAS...



L3. COPING SKILLS

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LESSON 3 QUESTION:

What coping skills could I use outside school?



YOU WILL NEED:

Change your Words, Change your Mindset and Developing a Growth Mindset posters; Success vs Frustration example.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- › Recap on the mindfulness session. Ask the children if they've used any techniques recently to help them cope with a situation.
- › Explain that this session is about positive words and language. Ask the children for examples of negative language, such as, 'I can't,' 'I don't want to.' Write examples up on the board.
- › Now ask the children for some positive language, such as, 'I will try my best,' 'I can do it if I try.'
- › Ask children to work in pairs and give them each a sheet of paper. Ask them to fold the sheet in half and on one side write the word positive and on the other the word negative.
- › Working in pairs, children list all the negative words and phrases they know on the negative side of their sheets. When they are finished share some of these. Ask them how they felt listing all these negative words.
- › Repeat the exercise but now with positive words and phrases on the positive side of the sheets. At the end, ask them if they felt better talking and thinking about positive words.
- › Explain that using positive words actually helps you feel better and helps your brain work better. Refer to the session about the emotional brain and how it can be calmed. Using positive language not only helps it to feel calm, but also works in a more positive way so that eventually it will stop overreacting and help you learn better. Share the 'Change your words, change your mindset' mini poster. Read out some of the statements to the children and ask if they use any of the negative statements.
- › Share the next document - 'Developing a growth mindset'. Explain to the children that by using positive language we can grow parts of our brain to be bigger and stronger. Encourage the children to start using the word 'yet' when they talk about not being good at something. From now on they can only say 'I am not good at yet'.
- › Ask for other examples where this could be used. Ask the children why it's important to use the word 'yet'.
- › Ask them to think of their own positive statements to use when thinking about future challenges, such as assessments. Share the example of Growth vs Fixed Mindset, and Success vs Frustration.
- › Explain that, in pairs, they are now going to make their own poster which shows success thinking vs frustration thinking.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- › Ask each pair to share their favourite positive phrase, then explain that they are going to turn it into a catchy mantra. Ask the children what they think a mantra is. Children may remember mantras from doing them in lower years. Explain that it is a short saying to be repeated over and over to yourself to help you feel calm, in control, happy and resilient.
- › Ask children to write their mantras on a piece of paper and put the mantras on the wall. You may want to practise power posing and chanting mantras at the same time.
- › Give out award leaves for children who show a great understanding of how to use these skills inside and outside school.



TEACHER NOTES:

→ POSSIBLE RELATED VOCABULARY TO TEACH:

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→ DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

Ask the children to think of a challenge they have had to face. It may be learning a hard maths strategy or getting better at a sport. Take some examples. Now ask, 'As you are older and wiser with all the expertise of positive language, what words of encouragement might you have said to your younger self?'

→ TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

→ WHAT WENT WELL?

→ WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

→ OTHER IDEAS...



L4. COPING SKILLS

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LESSON 4 QUESTION:

What is the importance of having good coping skills?



YOU WILL NEED:

Picture of the 3 brains; a device on which to show

Youtube clip: www.youtube.com/watch?v=hew3z2FlbME; art materials.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- › Tell the children that, in today's session, they are going to learn about the brain. Ask them what they think they know about the brain already. Collect all of the answers and write them on the board.
- › Share the picture of the Triune three brain model. Explain to the children that, over many years, our brains have evolved as we have needed to adapt and get smarter. The Triune brain model represents the stages in which the brain grew.
- › Go through the details of each of the brain parts and their 'functions' (given below) while pointing to the picture.
- › The reptilian brain has 3 survival functions. Ask the children what they think they are.
- › Answers: Food / drink, Sleep, Reproduction.
- › Ask the children why they think it's called the **reptilian brain**.
- › Answer: It's the oldest brain we have. It was the first part of the brain that developed. This part of the brain is quite basic, but we still need it.
- › Next introduce the **emotional brain**.
- › Explain to the children that this part of the brain developed next. It is also called the limbic system. Explain that this part of the brain makes us feel happy, sad, nervous, excited, anxious etc.
- › At this point ask the children to share special / memorable moments from their past, e.g. best holidays from years ago (avoid recent experiences).
- › When they share the experiences ask them how they feel. If they are talking about positive memories, they should start to feel positive
- › Explain that we link feelings to different experiences.
- › Explain that sometimes the emotional brain takes over when we have experiences. The emotional brain isn't always right and sometimes it can overreact and want all the attention. When it does this, it releases chemicals that can make us forget things.
- › Introduce the four effects of the emotional brain when overreacting and have fun physicalising these. When it overreacts it makes us want to:
 - › Fight (fists up)
 - › Flight (flapping arms)
 - › Flock (gathering friends)
 - › Freeze (statues)
- › Play the film clip. Re-cap briefly with the children the two brains so far. Explain that knowing how the brain works helps us cope with our emotions.
- › Next is the **neocortex** (the big bit!)
- › Explain to the children that this part of the brain is the biggest and most powerful. It can talk to the reptilian brain and the emotional brain and tell it to stop overreacting, as shown in the film clip.
- › Ask the children to suggest what this part of the brain could say to the emotional brain when it starts trying to take over. Look for answers like: I am in control; I am safe; I can do this; I am strong; I am confident. Explain that these are good coping skills. A person with good coping skills can tell when the naughty emotional brain is overreacting and tell it to calm down. Think of examples where this might happen.
- › Ask which brain tries to take over when they are going into their assessments. What does it do to us?
- › Explain whilst all three parts of the brain are important and they do important things to help us develop as human beings, sometimes different parts overreact. When they do this, even though they think they're helping us, they're not. With our big thinking brain, we can tell them to calm down and gain back control.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- › In groups, children should make a brain with the three parts. Can they write good, positive statements to help challenge the overreactive emotional brain when it gets worried, scared or stressed? Share these coping statements and brain models
- › Give out award leaves for coping skills.

TEACHER NOTES:



→ POSSIBLE RELATED VOCABULARY TO TEACH:

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→ DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

Practise saying the coping statements in a strong and meaningful voice. Get children to say these statements together and ask them how they feel afterwards.

→ TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

→ WHAT WENT WELL?

→ WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

→ OTHER IDEAS...



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LESSON 5 QUESTION:

Can I use positive visualisation to help me cope in challenging situations?



YOU WILL NEED:

A quiet place for children to sit and be able to visualise and imagine; pens and paper.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- › Explain to the children that, in this session, you want them to use their imagination.
- › Ask the children to think back to a time when they achieved something great. It might have been winning a race or doing well at a school subject and being congratulated for it. Make sure all the children have something and collect some examples from the class.
- › Ask the children to think about how they felt at the time of this achievement. How did it make them feel inside and outside? What thoughts did they have? Encourage the children to visualise the event and re-live the moment in their minds. Allow them to keep this focus for at least 30 seconds. Then ask the children to think about something else completely different, maybe eating sprouts.
- › Then ask the children to bring the positive experience back into their minds again and hold it for 30 seconds.
- › Repeat this exercise a few more times.
- › Ask the children how they felt when visualising the positive experience.
- › Explain to the children that this exercise is called 'positive visualisation' and doing this will help them feel better in times of challenge. They can also visualise places and people that help them feel positive. Ask for examples of what, or who, these might be.
- › Ask the children to make a positive visualisation list. The list should consist of all the positive places, people and things that make them feel better. Next to each thing/person on the list can they put the feeling that comes from thinking about it? For example, being in bed, reading a story = relaxed and safe.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- › When they've done this, let them share their lists with others.
- › Children can draw their favourite visualisation
- › Over the next week encourage the children to use their visualisation to help them feel better.
- › Explain they might use different visualisations for different things. Can the children think of visualisations that would work for them, in different situations?

TEACHER NOTES:



→ POSSIBLE RELATED VOCABULARY TO TEACH:

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→ DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

Some children could be challenged to explain positive visualisation to members of their family.

→ TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

→ WHAT WENT WELL?

→ WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

→ OTHER IDEAS...



L6. COPING SKILLS

Y5



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LESSON 6 QUESTION:

Can I devise a coping plan which will help me deal with different scenarios?



YOU WILL NEED:
Paper and pens.

TEACHER NOTES:



→ POSSIBLE RELATED VOCABULARY TO TEACH:

Coping, Strengths, Success, Co-operation, Friendships, Aid, Guide, Listen, Model, Together, Teamwork, Community, Compassion, Reassurance, Giving, Comfort, Thoughtfulness, Grit, Determination, Can-do, Attitude, Together, Standing tall, Breathing, Relaxation

→ DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

If the coping plans are being used for assessment purposes, the direct teaching input should be reduced.

Some children may benefit from being encouraged to share their plan with family members, if they are not intending to already. Parents should know how hard they worked on this and how much they intend to use it to help them cope better with challenging situations.

→ TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

→ WHAT WENT WELL?

→ WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

→ OTHER IDEAS...



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- › Recap on all of the things that have been learnt over the past few weeks such as: the benefits of using relaxation techniques and positive visualisation, how to change our negative language and thoughts to positive language and thoughts, how the different parts of our brain affect our ability to cope.
- › While you are recapping, the children should be making notes on their whiteboards.
- › Explain that you would like all of the children to recall a scenario which they have found difficult to cope with, in the past. They should share this, and the way that they felt, with a talk partner.
- › Tell them that they are going to write an individual coping plan, should the same situation crop up in the future.
- › In their coping plan, they should suggest techniques to try which will better help them to manage the situation. They should order these in a way which they think would be most successful.
- › Each child should write their plan. This should be in the form of a ten-step list of instructions.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- › Explain that you are going to make copies of the coping plans so that the children can have a copy at home and at school.
- › Ask them whether or not they will share their plans with anyone at home and what the benefits might be of doing this.
- › Ask the children where they would like to keep their plans at school. Would they like to display them, or keep them in their lockers or drawers? If they are kept in drawers, how will they remember to use them when they need to?