



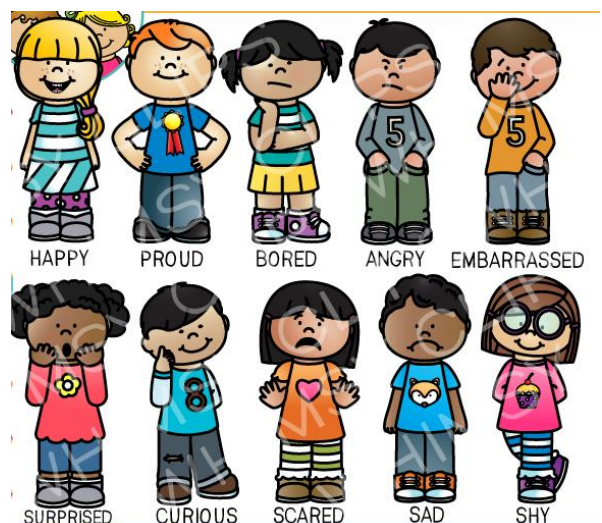
## Mindfulness challenges for you and your child

Here are some practical and fun activities for you and your children to do together. Take few minutes a day to put mindfulness in practice.

**What is mindfulness?** It is about focusing on the present, and being aware of what is going on both inside and outside, in a non-judgmental way. It's about noticing physical sensations and emotional responses, as well as your connection to other people and to your surroundings

### 1. Describing emotions

Sit with your child and ask them to describe different emotions. How does it feel when they are angry, happy or worried? You could prompt them by suggesting that they visualise their emotions as colours, or types of weather.



## 2. Listening circle

Take your child on a trip to a local park or nature reserve. Sit down in a circle and ask them to listen out for different sounds.

## 3. Looking at clouds

Keep an eye on the weather for this activity, as ideally you need partial cloud cover and a good breeze. Get your child to lie down outside and look up at the clouds (taking care not to look directly at the sun). Ask them to look out for shapes and notice how the clouds change as they move along.

## 4. Bubble balloon game

Blow up some balloons and play the don't-touch-the-floor game, but focusing on gentle movements. Pretend that the balloons are bubbles that might pop, so you can only tap them delicately.



## 5. Texture bag

Put a selection of objects with different shapes and textures into a bag. Get the children to take turns putting their hands in, feeling one of the objects and describing it to the others (without looking at it) in as much detail as possible.

## 6. Make a Glitter Jar for Mindfulness

Pour hot water and add the glitter glue. Put the lid on and shake it well. Watch the bits of glitter swirl around. These are like all the thoughts and feelings in our brain.

Talk to your child and explain that when we wake up, things are pretty settled. We can see that clearly. (Show how all the glitter has settled on the bottom of the jar.)

But pretty soon, things start swirling around. Maybe you had an argument with your brother or sister (swirl the jar). Our big sister eats the last pancake for breakfast, and it leads to a disagreement (shake the jar). We hear scary things on the news that make us worry (swirl the jar). Choose relevant topics to you and your family.



## 7-Mindful Posing

One easy way for children to dip their toes into mindfulness is through body poses. To get your kids excited, tell them that doing fun poses can help them feel strong, brave, and happy.

Go somewhere quiet and familiar, a place they feel safe. Next, tell them to try one of the following poses:

1. The Superman: this pose is practiced by standing with the feet just wider than the hips, fists clenched, and arms reached out to the sky, stretching the body as tall as possible.
2. The Wonder Woman: this pose is struck by standing tall with legs wider than hip-width apart and hands or fists placed on the hips. Ask your child how he/ she feels after a few rounds of trying either of these poses. You may be surprised.



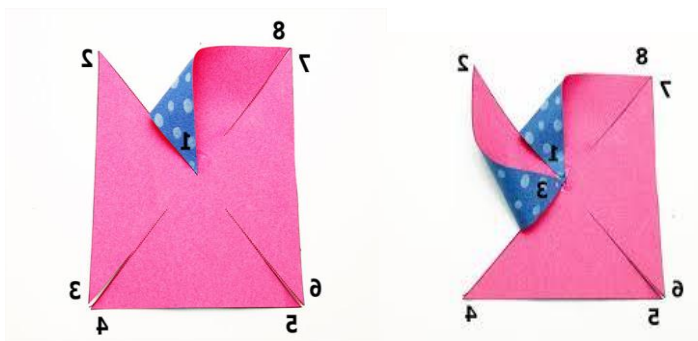
**8. Breathing with a pinwheel:** This exercise allows us to see how different ways of breathing affect how our mind and

- Step 1 With a **pinwheel** for your child and yourself, sit with your back straight and your body relaxed.
- Step 2 Blow on your **pinwheels** together using long, deep breaths, and notice how you feel. ...
- Step 3 Now blow on the **pinwheels** using short, quick breaths. ...
- Step 4 Now blow on the **pinwheels** normally.



**STEPS to make a pinwheel:**

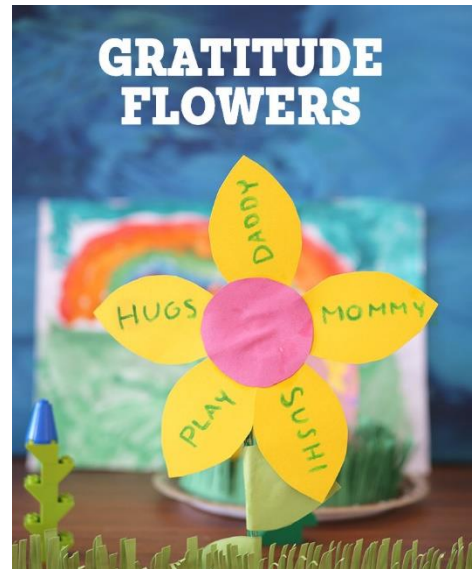
1. Make a pair of squares. Start out by cutting two identical squares from paper or cardstock. ...
2. Decorate the squares. ...
3. Cut out the squares. ...
4. Glue the squares together. ...
5. Cut four slits. ...
6. Bring one tip to the centre. ...
7. Bring the next tip to the centre. ...
8. Bring the remaining tips to the centre.



### 9. Gratitude flower:

Spend some time talking about things you're grateful for as you create your flowers. With younger children you may want to start by explaining gratitude and giving them some examples.

Encourage your child to think that the gratitude flowers grow when you give them love and joy. Talk about all the positive things in your lives.



### 9. Go on Safari:

