

'Breathing in, I am calm

Breathing out I smile'

- Thich Nhat Hanh

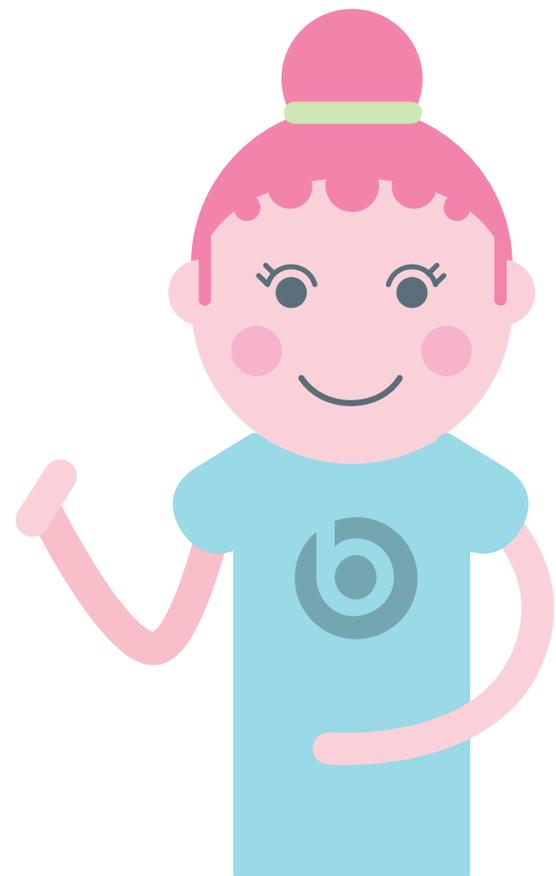
Sometimes the way we feel inside is just like the weather outside. If we are happy and smiling, it's just like a sunny day. If we're grumpy it's just like our mind is full of dark clouds. Perhaps if we're angry – we can imagine it's just like thunder and lightning, if we're sad – it's raining, or if we're lonely it might be cold and frosty.

We all experience different types of personal weather at different times – that's entirely normal and whatever our personal weather is it's OK to feel that way! Just like the weather, this morning might be different to this afternoon, and today might be different to tomorrow – it's always changing!

For this week's challenge we'd like you to draw your very own personal weather report each day. You can use our Personal Weather Diary or create your own. You might like to share your drawing with other members of your family - they might also like to draw their own personal weather report! Please share your reports with us next week.

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'It is not happiness that makes us grateful, but gratefulness that makes us happy.'

- David Steindl-Rast

Sit quietly for a few moments and think about something you are grateful for. It might be people – our family and our friends, our pets, a favourite book, game, toy or exercise - or lots of other things – it can be big things or small things because they are all important.

Now for the next few moments write down or draw a picture of what you've chosen to be grateful for.

When you've finished, take 3 slow mindful breaths in and out and say to yourself "Today I am grateful for" (whatever you have chosen for your note or drawing).

If we can think of things that we are grateful for each day it can make a big difference and it helps us to feel better – even if they are only small things like the sun shining, having something nice for lunch, or feeling warm and cosy when it's really cold. Being grateful can help to make us smile and feel happier too!

For this activity we'd like you to write down or draw something that you are grateful for. If you'd like to, you can ask other members of your family or household to do the same this week. Share with each other the things that you're grateful for by placing your notes or drawings where everyone can see them – perhaps, for example, in the kitchen somewhere, on a notice board or on the fridge.



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“ and then the whole world
walked inside and shut their doors
and said we will stop it all. everything.
to protect our weaker ones
our sicker ones. our older ones.
and nothing. nothing in the history of humankind
ever felt more like love than this. - CD

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For this activity we'd like you to write down a list of all the people that you love – it can be your family, carers and friends – it can be the people that you share your home with and people that you miss seeing at the moment.

Choose someone from your list and write a note saying something special about them that you love. You can use our Do-BeMindful Notes / Envelopes to do this.

Share the notes that you've written with the people you love. For the people in your home you might put your note under their pillow as a lovely surprise for them to find. For others, you can read these notes out to them as a lovely surprise the next time you speak to them in a call.

Notice how it feels to tell the people you love how much they mean to you. You'll make everyone smile and feel happy – and it will make you smile and feel happy too!



'May you be safe
May you be healthy
May you be happy
May you live in peace.'
- Loving Kindness Meditation

Sometimes we can find life difficult and things don't go the way we would like them to. We can be enjoying doing lots of new things one day, and then the next we can feel sad because we can't do many of the things we're used to doing. Sometimes we just need to be patient and trust things will change – perhaps not today or tomorrow – but rest assured things will change as they always do and often in even better ways than you could wish for!

Sit quietly for a few moments and think about what you wish for – what do you wish for yourself? For your family? For friends? For others? For the whole world?

For this activity we'd like you to make a wishing tree. To make this you'll need some twigs or little branches, or paper straws, or chop sticks (or anything that you have handy to make your wishing tree). Place the twigs / branches / straws / chop sticks in an empty jar or vase to make the tree. Prepare some leaves for your wishing tree by drawing these on a piece of paper, cutting out them out and colouring in one side. On the other, blank side of your leaf write down your wish. Using clear tape or glue, stick your leaf to a piece of thread or string and then hang this on one of the branches of your wishing tree.

Once you've added your wishes to your tree, take a few moments to share this with other members of your family or household.



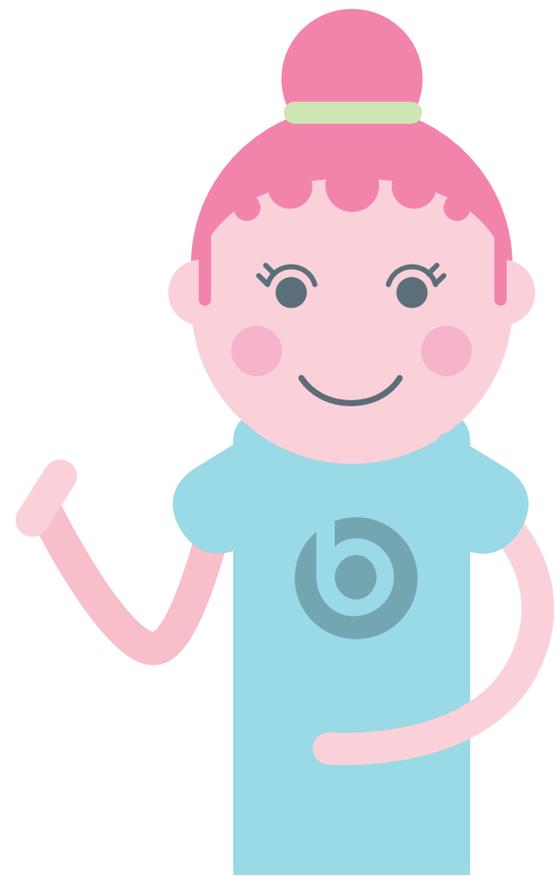
‘We have two ears and one mouth
so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.’ Epicurus

Have you ever had a conversation when you weren't really listening to what the other person was saying? Perhaps you were checking your mobile phone or laptop, or playing a game, or watching TV while Mum, Dad, a brother, sister or a carer was trying to talk to you? Perhaps you were in 'autopilot' when someone was speaking to you and instead of focusing your attention on listening carefully your mind just wandered off like an untrained little puppy!

Being mindful of the ways we communicate and connect with others through listening and speaking helps us to build positive, caring relationships that are so important in our lives for our mental wellbeing. As the quotation says, 'We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.'

For this activity we'd like you to build some device-free time into your day so that you can practise communicating mindfully with your family or carers at home. Perhaps choose one meal during the day and make it device-free for everyone so that no-one is distracted with phones, laptops, tablets or TV etc. You can ask everyone at home to join in with you! See if you can really listen to each other and stay out of autopilot.

Write down or draw something important that you noticed during your device-free time and share with members of your family or household how it felt to spend some device-free time truly listening and connecting with each other.



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‘ Just watch this moment, without trying to change it at all.
What is happening?
What do you feel?
What do you see?
What do you hear?’ Jon Kabat-Zinn

Curiosity: The skill of being inquisitive, an eagerness to enquire, explore and learn.

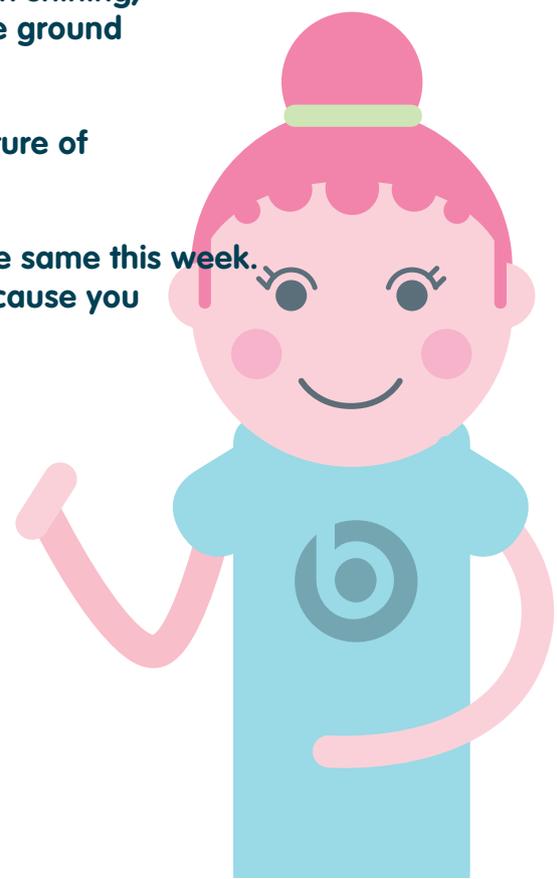
When we are curious we see things differently ... we sense what is happening in the present moment, taking note of what is, regardless of what it looked like before or what we might have expected it to be. We can harness the power of curiosity to transform simple routines and everyday tasks into new, fascinating and enjoyable experiences.

Too often we can miss so much and take so many things for granted if we aren't curious – we're just not aware of what we're doing or what's going on around us. Life can be much more interesting and fun if we practise being curious in our everyday lives and we can find happiness in all sorts of unexpected activities!

For this activity we'd like you to go on a mindful walk and practise being curious. Your walk can be outside or inside – it can be a walk in the park, along your street, around your garden or in your home. Your walk can be anywhere – but the important thing to remember is to be curious during your walk. Take time to notice all the sounds that you hear (it could be people talking or laughing, birds singing, a bicycle passing by, or the wind blowing), the smells, the colours, the objects that you see (it could be the branches and leaves on a tree, the clouds in the sky, the sun shining, or rain drops on a window), the sensation of your feet touching the ground and the movement of your body with each step.

Once you've finished your mindful walk, write down or draw a picture of all the new things you noticed and experienced.

If you'd like to, you can ask other members of your family to do the same this week. Share with each other all the new things that made you happy because you re-awakened that often forgotten, powerful sense of curiosity.



“Our life is shaped by our mind,
for we become what we think.”

-Buddha

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Scientific research shows us that we can increase our happiness and wellbeing by improving our 'Positivity Ratio'. This means that we flourish when we choose to focus our thoughts on all the positive experiences in our lives. More often than not when we're busy we simply do not notice or acknowledge our positive experiences – but when we take time each day to appreciate even the simplest things it can shape our minds in positive ways. By focusing our attention each day on the positive experiences and good things in our lives we can build our 'Positivity Ratio'. This, in turn, re-wires our brain for happiness, improves our sense of wellbeing and nurtures our resilience to help us cope with the challenging times in our lives.

We have opportunities to increase our 'Positivity Ratio' through what we do and how we think in our daily lives - and the easiest way of doing this is to keep a diary of our positive thoughts.

This activity is a 7 day challenge - we'd like you to complete the My Positive Thoughts Diary each day.

We've given you some ideas to complete your diary each day but you can choose whichever positive thoughts you'd like – you can also either write down or draw a picture of these in your diary. Notice how it helps to make you feel happier when you think about the positive experiences and good things that have happened in your life each day. Share your positive thoughts with members of your family or household - notice how sharing positivity helps to make you feel happy too!



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